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Events of the Week.

It is clear that a General Election is imminent, and that its date depends on whether a formal agreement to dissolve at such and such a date can be struck between Mr. Lloyd George and the Conservative Party, on the understanding that the two sides of the Coalition part amicably; or whether the Prime Minister will act on his own responsibility. Probably the first course will be taken. The Cabinet is not actually in pieces, though the Coalition is; and amid the *débris* of Toryism, Liberalism, and Constitutionalism which strew Mr. George's destructive career, a roof has just been left for his own head. He is hurrying off to Manchester to-day to find a new one; while Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham shores up what is left of the old structure. But the policy of the two voices merely holds till the Conservative Conference formally unifies the Tory Party, and openly severs it from the Coalition-Liberals. The party system will return in a modified form, and the old opposition of Left and Right recur, subject to the new and very real issues raised by the advent of the Labor Party. For our part we hope that this party will take Mr. Clynes's hint, and fight the General Election with an eye on the issues which await it later, unless the words Progress and Peace are deemed to be idle breath. And the Liberal Party will be well advised to adjust its mental bearings to the same contingency.

THE latest turn of the Near Eastern crisis was resolved once again by Lord Curzon, who made a sudden trip to Paris on Friday of last week to put to M. Poincaré the plain question whether he stood by the agreement of September 23rd or by the pro-Turkish declarations of that stranded delegate, M. Franklin-Bouillon, at Mudania. The interview appears at moments to have strained the temper of the participants considerably, but after much telephoning to London, where the Cabinet was sitting, to raise sundry objections, an agreement was signed which left the sky clear. The Allies held together and the Note of September 23rd remained the basis of their agreement, the chief modification of its terms being the provision that the Turks, instead of entering Eastern Thrace only after the signature of peace, should be

entitled to dispatch thither officials and a limited gendarmerie thirty days after the evacuation by the Greeks had been completed. The Generals have also arranged that Allied troops shall act as a screen between Turks and Greeks, while the neutral zone along the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus is to be delimited and narrowed. For prompt action there is ground. Once the Allies had announced that the Turks were to have Eastern Thrace, there was an undeniably strong case for cutting short the uncertainty and averting the suspicion that the Greeks were being given time to consolidate their position while the Kemalists were refused passage into Europe. For a man who has been laid up for most of the summer Lord Curzon accomplished a considerable physical feat. He left London on Friday at two o'clock in the afternoon after attending a morning Cabinet, reached Paris about ten in the evening, remained in conference with M. Poincaré most of the night, retired to bed at five in the morning, and was at the Quai d'Orsay again by nine.

THE demonstration that the Allies were after all working in unison had an immediate effect, the terms handed by General Harington to Ismet Pasha on Monday being accepted and signed some time before midnight on Tuesday. The delay was caused by Ismet's declaration that he must refer to Angora the provisions regarding the limitation of the Turkish gendarmerie in Thrace and also the definition of the neutral zones. The former point was the more contentious, the Turks having originally stood out for a form of words that would have permitted them to ferry their entire army over to Thrace under the guise of gendarmerie. As it is, the strength of this force is, as the protocol diplomatically puts it, to be "left to the discretion of the Nationalists subject to approval by the Allies," a formula which General Harington and the rest of the Generals have worked out at 8,000.

BUT there is room for trouble still, for after forty-five days the gendarmerie may be increased, and we hear nothing of European officers. Harington seems to have bluffed Ismet Pasha into final acquiescence. "I walked into the Conference," he told the "Morning Post," "with two ultimatums, one in each pocket," and he fingered one of them (presumably the war one) as Ismet debated his answer. Fifteen days are given the Greek army to get out of Thrace, and the Turks obtain full possession a month later. The interval is short for the evacuation of that part of the civil population—comprising almost certainly the greater part of the non-Moslem elements—which will consent under no conditions to face the perils of Turkish rule. Dr. Nansen is at Constantinople on behalf of the League of Nations, and he will no doubt take a hand in this work. The Greeks, urged by M. Venizelos, now accredited diplomatic representative of the Athens Government, have reluctantly resigned themselves to the loss of Eastern Thrace, but sporadic resistance by irregulars must be looked for before the transfer is completed.

UNLESS fresh trouble arises in the neutral zones, where the Turks appear to be making a genuine attempt to avoid unfortunate incidents, the next serious business

will be the conference of peace. Or rather the conferences, for there appears to be general agreement that the question of the freedom of the Straits will be dealt with separately, possibly in a conference summoned by the League of Nations. To that, however, there are rather serious objections. In the first place it is extremely unlikely that in the main discussions the Turks will agree to handing over the Straits question without qualification to a League Conference, particularly as the Soviet Government, whose influence at Angora is considerable, has declared definitely that it means to have a voice in the decision as to the Straits—that, manifestly, could not be denied it—and that it refuses to have anything to do with the League. Meanwhile the belated report of the Prime Minister's interview with the Labor deputation contains what must be supposed to be an official declaration of the Cabinet's policy. According to this it is desired to hand over the guardianship of the Straits to the League, but only on the understanding that the League keeps an actual force there to guarantee freedom of passage. To that there will be considerable opposition, both because there is strong reason to doubt whether armed occupation, even if the Turks would make peace on those terms, is of any real value, and because the raising of the first League army would be a highly contentious question.

SOME recent criticisms of the Prime Minister's adventures in foreign policy have lost point through the confusion into which their authors have fallen between the personnel and functions of the Cabinet Secretariat, housed in Whitehall Gardens, and the Prime Minister's personal secretariat, which had till lately its temporary dwelling in the garden of 10, Downing Street. At the present moment that sacred enclosure is being restored to its proper functions without any great detriment to the public interest, and what is left of the once imposing retinue of the Prime Minister has moved into a more enduring habitation under the actual roof of No. 10. The Cabinet Secretariat, to do it justice, is responsible for none of the scares of the past month. Under Sir Maurice Hankey, with Professor Tom Jones as his chief assistant, the Cabinet Secretariat provides the Prime Minister with an official, rather than personal, general staff of his own, particularly in regard to foreign and Irish affairs. The criticism to be brought against it is that it is organized on a scale altogether out of proportion to the secretarial duties it might be supposed to discharge, and that it exists on this scale largely to enable the Prime Minister to conduct foreign policy without the inconveniences of Foreign Office intervention.

It is the Prime Minister's Secretariat, on the other hand, which maintains the association with the Press established with such conspicuous success by that eminent diplomatist Sir William Sutherland, and it was by a member of this establishment, not the Cabinet Secretariat, that the notorious manifesto of September 16th was given to the world. The channel of the Prime Minister's views on foreign affairs is normally Sir Edward Grigg, successor to Mr. Philip Kerr. So far as actual news is dispensed through this medium there is nothing to be said. Honest publicity can do nothing but good. So far as the Prime Minister's opinions are served out to a Press that seems largely incapable of discrimination, there is a case for changing the system, and a much stronger one for changing the Prime Minister.

THE refusal of the Soviet Government to ratify the agreement lately made with Mr. Leslie Urquhart on behalf of the Russo-Asiatic Consolidated makes the task of reading the mind of Lenin and his colleagues harder than ever. The concessions involved had been granted on terms very beneficial to Russia, and M. Krassin, who negotiated them, had taken great credit for the piece of business he had carried through, seeing in it the prelude to a new era of Western investment in Russia. The explanations of the unexpected refusal to ratify are various. According to some versions the presence of M. Herriot, the Radical Mayor of Lyons, and the idea of playing off France against England in the matter of concessions, account for a good deal. Other authorities have it that Lenin exerted his power to disappoint Mr. Urquhart as a reply to the British decision (no such decision appears in fact to have been taken) to exclude Russia from the conference on the Straits. Alternatively it is suggested that the Moscow Government always hoped to use the Urquhart concession as a means of extracting official recognition from Great Britain. The general upshot is that the reconstruction of Russia gets a further set-back and the Russo-Asiatic shareholders lose the opportunity of recovering a little of what they have lost. But if Russia does come into the Straits Conference, as doubtless she will, contacts may be established that will enable a great many questions of foreign concessions to be talked over informally to some purpose.

BRITISH shipping companies are taking a sensible course in looking primarily on the lighter side of the United States Government's decision that no vessel may come within the three-mile limit with a pint of alcoholic liquor on board. The ruling appears to be a naked attempt to catch votes. The Administration calculate that the prohibitionists will show their gratitude for this stout assertion of principle by supporting the Ship Subsidy Bill to which President Harding attaches such importance. Incidentally they may at the same time be induced to support Administration candidates at next month's elections. Theoretically the ban applies to any vessel clearing for an American port after to-day. But it is assumed that test cases will be brought and that the injunctions certain to be granted, pending a Supreme Court judgment, may keep present conditions in being for something like two years. Long before then the Administration will have got all it can get from its action. The prophecies of a general diversion of Atlantic liners from New York to Halifax or Quebec are, therefore, not likely to be realized yet. Meanwhile Italy has some reason for special concern. Italian captains are required by law to include wine in their crew's rations. France, with her special interest in the wine trade, will make "diplomatic representations."

THE cumulative effects of low wages and unemployment in the coalfields have produced so strong a feeling among the men, approaching in some districts to despair, that the Miners' Federation has been forced to appeal once more to the owners and the Government. It asks them to co-operate in an effort to gain at least a living wage for the colliery workers. The owners have not only reaffirmed their contention that they cannot improve the conditions, but have suggested that before long they must ask for payment of the profits that have gone to make up the present minimum wages. From this rebuff the Federation officials turn to the Prime Minister, who is to meet them next week, but they can hardly hope that Mr. Lloyd George will have anything

better to offer them. The truth is that nothing short of drastic reorganization—technical, scientific, and commercial—on the lines laid down by the experts at the Sankey Commission inquiry can substantially improve the conditions of the industry. The sooner we have a Government prepared to tackle this problem of the country's key industries, coal and agriculture—for both are in the same evil plight—the better it will be for the nation as a whole as well as for the miners and the rural workers. It is certain that the miners will not go on indefinitely carrying on a vital national service for starvation wages.

* * *

THE biennial electoral campaign in the United States is now at the flood, and it may be taken for granted that domestic issues alone will count on the polling day, November 7th. Republican candidates will have a hard task in defending the Administration, which, in its twenty months of office, has been in continuous difficulties. The Fordney Tariff Act will bring votes to the Democrats, as also will the President's stand against the soldiers' bonus and his management of the recent strikers. But the Democrats have no leader and no programme, and at worst the Republicans should retain a good majority in the House and keep their ascendancy in the Senate. The situation as regards European issues may be inferred from the announcement that Washington is against all plans of debt remission, and from ex-Governor Cox's immediate dropping of his talk about debts and the League on his return from Europe. On neither side will the party managers allow Prohibition to be a direct issue. New York State may easily elect Mr. Alfred Smith, the Democrat, as Governor; but if so it will be because he is a good candidate, not because he is "damp."

* * *

WITH the exception of those articles which deal with the Executive, the Irish Constitution Bill has now passed its second reading in the Dáil. All the sections which determine Anglo-Irish relations have been passed without substantial change, the last of them on Tuesday when the article providing for appeals to the Privy Council was adopted. It now stands beyond question that the Constitution transgresses neither the spirit nor the letter of the Anglo-Irish Treaty—it flaps easily within its four corners. A Labor amendment to delete the appeal to the King in Council was defeated with the usual Government majority of two to one, and another amendment substituting liberty of appeal to some future undefined Dominion Court found hardly any support. Mr. Gavan Duffy led the opposition to this proposal on the main ground that it replaced a dead log with a lively stork. Though he voted for the Labor Party's amendment, he confidently claimed that the existing clause would remain a dead letter, and the Minister for Local Government appeared to share this view. The clause places Ireland in regard to the Privy Council in a position identical with South Africa and superior to Canada, inasmuch as no appeal will lie in domestic litigation. The South African model was also followed when an amendment to Article 67 was adopted distinguishing between the manner of appointing Judges of the High Court and members of inferior tribunals. These are fruitful and notable departures from the limitations suggested by Clause 3 of the Treaty.

* * *

THE remaining Executive section is of some general interest as well as of Irish importance. It will be remembered that the original clause provided for an Executive of twelve, of whom four only were permitted to be members of Parliament. The non-Parliamentary

members are to be chosen from the general body of citizens by a non-Party committee of the House, and are removable from office only upon the report of an impartial Dáil Committee on a charge of misconduct or inefficiency. The object of this proposal is plain. It is aimed at the Party system, at the collective responsibility of Ministers, and is intended to secure a continuity of technical competence in certain departments which should not be exposed to the vicissitudes of politics. It is fitted to a country like Ireland, where all the best men are not always in Parliament, where qualified and responsible men are not as numerous as political adventurers, where the spirit of Party runs high and the spirit of compromise rarely blunts a logical blade. Apprehension was shown in the debates for the responsibility of Ministers to the Chamber, and some members disliked the absence from their ranks of a majority of the Executive. In the result a motion was adopted approving of the principle of outside Ministers, but requiring that those Ministers who are members of the Executive Council should also be members of Parliament.

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A BLUE BOOK was issued on October 2nd (Stationery Office, 6s.) which gives an account of the trading and commercial services by Government Departments to March 31st, 1921. The report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General is appended. We shall, next week, examine the subject in detail. But in the meantime, the daily Press is using the material as "A Record of Waste," for political purposes. The State control of foodstuffs, of raw materials, of transport, of the manufacture on a vast scale of important commodities, and of marine insurance, which "helped to win the war," because private enterprise was wholly incapable of handling the problem, is to be used now as an argument against State enterprise by those who prefer that Big Business should have great profits rather than that the community should have good service. The truth is many of these enterprises were so successful that they had to be destroyed in order to give them the appearance of failure. The destruction by the Government of public works that had been built in the years of need, and which proved to be, not only of general benefit, but the embodiment of a finer ideal of service, would have been seen for the gross offence it is but for its other misdeeds. The scrapping of the profitable National Restaurants, which checked some particularly bad profiteering, was effected, at a public loss, at the instance of the private caterers. That is a minor instance. There was the scandal of the dismantling of the model town at Gretna, and of the forced ruin at Waddon Aircraft factory, which cost nearly two millions, at the moment when it was completed; these, and many others, are instances not of the failure of the State managers in trading and manufacture, but of the determination of the Government to prevent competition with Big Business.

* * *

MR. WELLS's candidature in the Labor interest for the University of London is a considerable event, and we desire a prosperous issue for it. For the most part, Literature and Politics are different pursuits, carried on by very different kinds of men; but they have met before, and in Mr. Wells's personality there is a real and important fusion. Mr. Wells has, indeed, written of things to come more than of things that are; but the event has often followed fast on his intuition of it. It is precisely this gift of looking forward which is wanting to the existing British practice of the political art, and London University, being in itself a creation of this new mind, should be proud to own the most modern of writers as its Member.

Politics and Affairs.

THE ALTERNATIVE TO LLOYD GEORGE.

THERE are indubitable signs of storm in the air. The events of the last three weeks have shaken the Coalition to its base. The structure, indeed, stands, like one of the shell-swept ruins of the war. But a touch may bring it down; while the repute and public favor of its Chief, once the capital arch of its power, are as rags fluttering in the wind. Take any test of power you will. To-day, of the serried mass of Mr. George's following in the London Press, only one journal of political force remains, and only one Metropolitan paper serves him as an organ of publication and defence. Three candidates compete for the votes of an important Welsh constituency. Not one dare call himself a friend of the Coalition. No meeting has been summoned, or could be held, to applaud or condone the policy of war with Turkey implied in the Prime Minister's wild manifestoes and his compromising and autocratic action. The dissensions and divisions of the Cabinet appear in their almost daily changes of policy, and in the admitted and scandalous divergence between the Prime Minister's Secretariat (which is the medium of his communications with the Press) and the Foreign Office, which, through its Chief, supplies their corrective. The country, in imminent peril of war—unnecessary war—has woke up at last, sees how it is governed, and is resolving to end Lloyd Georgism and to dismiss Lloyd George.

In a crisis so sudden, and, save for the follies of the Minister, so unprovoked, the Labor Party has possessed one great advantage. Mr. George's work in disintegrating the political system of England happens to have left one party intact, blessed with a knowledge of its own mind, and with a powerful organization to express it. In calling for the dismissal of an obviously disunited Government, and the election of a new Parliament, the Labor Party has spoken the thought of millions who disagree with it almost as much as that of the formidable host it leads into battle. If any character at all belongs to the existing House of Commons, it is certainly not that of a War Parliament. It was made to acclaim Mr. George's peace, not to promote his new war. The peace has not worked, and the war has not come off; and between the misfit and the misfire, and the enormous scandal of his administration, enough has been said and done to ruin a dozen Governments, and any Constitution less tough than the British. Mr. George is to-day an unwanted man. His coquetry with Labor ended long ago, and now Toryism, groaning under its capricious rider, sweats to be rid of him. To judge by the one staunch advocate he has left in the Press, he still has hopes of a Liberal following which knows not what Liberalism means. But you may search the story of our Prime Ministers from Walpole without finding one who was such a universal object, not of criticism only, but of deep personal distrust. And this feeling about Mr. Lloyd George is not merely national, but European. The country suffers in its relationships with foreign Powers because its Prime Minister's word is thought to be a thing of air. We do not know whether the Prime Minister in his speech at Manchester will evoke the great name of Gladstone to sustain his caricature of Gladstonianism in the Near East. The Prime Minister marched to the edge of a horrible war for no cause that could be called moral, least of all Christian. He backed Greek Imperialism to win, and it lost. He backed Turkish Nationalism to lose, and it won. But Gladstone's Eastern policy was not a gamble in this or that form of racial ambition; it was part of his apostolate of moral

force in international life. He could no more have written the Manifesto than St. Augustine could have written Rabelais.

It is time, therefore, to have done with Mr. George; and to look for a finer and more competent representation of the national character. Where shall it be found? Sir Donald Maclean, speaking for Liberalism, declared it to be the true alternative; while Labor, speaking for itself, proclaims a Labor Government. We dissent from neither. A statesman of these times who would govern without the help of Labor is a fool; while we find in the growth of the Labor Party, not a revolutionary doctrine so much as the application of the liberal spirit to a new society filled with the desire for social justice.* These forces of the Left are of various shades and qualities. But they eventually combine into a common pattern. There is not a Socialist Party in Europe that has not learned the lesson that finally the Labor Party will have to learn, that nowadays governing forces must be like-minded, but need not be identical. There is nothing immoral in that, any more than there is in two travellers along the same road agreeing to take the same conveyance. The immorality comes in when the two parties to a Coalition agree to swallow alternate doses of each other's principles. This is the rule of the present Coalition, so far as it has any rule at all; and it is only another word for corruption. And that word would apply to a Liberal-Labor understanding, unless the two parties could construct a working programme honorable and acceptable to both. That, we shall be told, is a phrase. So it is. Some things must happen before a Liberal and a Labor Party come together, and one of them is a younger, more modern, and more vital Liberal leadership. Parties, like individuals, have their spiritual food supplied to them by men of striking character, and unusual representative and interpretive power. In our view, Liberalism could find such a leadership in Lord Robert Cecil, as the nearest embodiment both of the Gladstonian spirit and of the Radical affinities with Labor, itself a form of social Radicalism. The second is that Liberalism must address itself to the existing scandals of our industrialism, the cruel and anti-national treatment of the miners, the problems of agriculture and transport, the problem of unemployment. And on its side we hope that the Labor Party will anchor itself firmly to Free Trade. Granted such an accommodation, where is the obstacle to a Government of the Left, to which Labor and Liberalism each made its appropriate contribution? A Labor Premiership would, we admit, be essential. But in yielding that primacy the Liberals would only be bidding the new times good morning, and clearing a space for their own activities in them.

But we shall be told that the Labor Party wants no co-operation with anybody. *Fara da se* is its motto. It is a brave one; and it may be good for an election. The massed power of the Party is imposing; its following inherits the passionate and idealistic loyalties which made Liberalism in its golden prime; and its objects, which are the elimination of poverty in the State—at least of a mean and depressing poverty—and the attainment of peace in the world of nations, are the most moral in politics. But there is another world than the world of Labor. There is the world of Conservatism, of possession. It is a very powerful world, and it knows a great deal about Government. To-day it is in a fever to be rid of a dangerous and flighty personality. Good. But to-morrow it will have a different purpose. It will want to resume the management of England. It has great allies—in prejudice, in fear, in the instinctive prudence

* See some wise words on this subject by Lord Cowdray.

of our people faced with a totally new experiment in the personnel of a British Cabinet. And there are some material obstacles. There is, for example, the unquestioned difficulty of how to accommodate a Labor Government with the Monarchy and the House of Lords. The King is a good Constitutionalist, and he inherits the later tradition of his house, which has long obliterated its earlier stubbornness. But it will not always be easy to reconcile the maintenance of a costly household with the ideas of democracy, or to supply the Ministers and officials who will at least nominally overlook it from the ranks of a party of manual workers. Much more serious is the question of the Lords. It is there, an integral part of the Constitution, and its Chairman, the Lord Chancellor, stands for a great historic figure, at one time the greatest in the realm. He must be maintained, and the House of Lords is able enough, and powerful enough in the public eye, to set up a stream of criticism that must be met. Where will the Labor Peers come from? Can there be such a thing as a Labor Peer? The House of Lords cannot be abolished by fiat of any party, however strong; and the process of removal or even of attenuation will be a long and an intricate operation. If there is to be no connection with the Liberal Party—still quite formidably represented in the Upper House—or even a relation of hostility, how can Labor hold its place in the roll-call of Constitutional British Ministries? These are things that call for consideration. There is a way out of them, but there is no sign that the Labor Party has considered it. Mr. Sidney Webb may imagine that the House of Lords can be slain by a Fabian Tract. Probably Mr. Henderson is less sanguine.

We suggest these reflections because they occur in the process of politics, and not merely in the imaginations of the Whig mind. All we ask to-day, and in face of a coming Election, is that both parties, Labor and Liberal, should have them in view. The defeat of a device so odious as the Coalition, and of a personality so unworthy as Mr. Lloyd George, is a great political object. But the salvation of Europe, and the reconstruction of its politics, is a greater. It is attainable only with an unusual effort of will and of the reasonable intelligence of man. We think the best British contribution to it would be achieved through a Government of the Left. But he who thinks it should will it, and who wills the end should will the means also.

BACK TO '78.

MR. GEORGE and Mr. Churchill have made another valiant attempt to get the guns to go off. They have had another failure marked by another journey of Lord Curzon to Paris. The guns, it is true, have this time begun to go off, but the wrong way round, not on the front at Chanak against the Turks, but on the domestic front against the Prime Minister. We can leave him for the moment under the drum-fire of "The Observer." For we are getting to the point at which the country and Europe will have to pay the bill for Mr. George's breakages, and it is time that we began to estimate the damage. The subject of the last war-scare shows that the Prime Minister is slowly, but surely, being pushed by the curious combination of General Harington, Lord Curzon, M. Poincaré, and the British public into the Conference. Last week-end the war-lords of Downing Street were inviting us to fight the Turks, no longer for a neutral zone which had no permanent importance or reality, but over Eastern

Thrace, which is at least a vital question in the permanent settlement with Turkey, and must therefore furnish one of the chief problems of the Conference. That shows that the curtain has begun to go up on the last act in Mr. George's Eastern drama; it remains for us now to carry out the corpses—there are plenty of them—and to straighten things out as best we may.

It is an unpleasant outlook which confronts one, as soon as one pauses to consider the situation from this point of view. There can be no happy ending to Mr. George's Eastern drama, for the settlement, whatever it may be, must be a tragedy. Take its bare outline of the settlement as given in the Allies' Note to Kemal Pasha, and consider it from a rather wider point of view than that of a mere loophole of escape from the consequences of Mr. George's policy. The Turks regain Asia Minor and the ruins of Smyrna at a cost in human savagery and suffering which it is impossible for an Englishman in London to realize at all. The Turks regain Constantinople and the Straits, and across the face of this part of the settlement will be pasted a sham guarantee of their "freedom" in order to cover the full nakedness of Mr. George's failure. Then we come to Eastern Thrace. The Turk will be back again in Europe, at Adrianople and Kirk Kilisse, and the Conference at Mudania has considered, and the Conference for the final settlement will have to consider, the old, old question of how to get him there and keep him there with a minimum of misery for his subject populations. Surely it must come as a shock to even the most cynical observer of human history to see where the political society of 1922 has got to. After all the "sacrifices" of the war, the high-falutin' of war aims and Fourteen Points, and a new Europe, the world has gone back during the last two years in a flash through 1914 to the pernicious international system of 1878 and 1854. General Harington wrangling with Ismet Pasha at Mudania over the European officers for the Turkish gendarmerie who are to keep the holocaust of Greeks within reasonable limits, is simply Colonel Verand *resurrectus* wrangling with Hilmi Pasha in 1904 over the European officers for the Turkish gendarmerie who, under the Mürsteg Programme, were to keep the holocaust of Macedonians within reasonable limits.

In saying this we are neither anti-Turk nor pro-Greek. If we had to choose between being a Greek at the tender mercy of a Turkish administration, or a Turk at the tender mercy of a Greek administration, our only thought would be to disappear with extreme rapidity to some quarter of the globe where no one had ever heard of either a Greek or a Turk. Nor are we saying that it is possible now to prevent the Turk returning to Europe and Adrianople; the British and French Governments between them have seen to it that this is now impossible except at the price of the greater evil of further war. We are simply stating the facts which confront the world now that, after Mr. Wilson, M. Clemenceau, Mr. George, and M. Poincaré have called the tune, it has to pay that very skilful Eastern piper, the Turk. And the fact is that we have gone back to 1904, 1878, and 1854 in every sense of the words. When all the face-saving devices and pretences are removed, it is clear that our statesmen have left only one really vital problem for the Conference, namely, how the Ottoman Empire can be re-established with a minimum of misery and a maximum of security for its subject populations in Europe and Asia Minor. The introduction of the Turkish administration and army into Eastern Thrace and the evacuation of the Greeks is only a particular instance in a much larger problem. The whole history of the last century has shown that the Turks are only

one of a number of Balkan and Near Eastern—we might even add Western—races who cannot be safely trusted with unfettered control and “sovereignty” over peoples of other nationality or religion. If the Turkish army were allowed to enter Thrace in the next week or two, there would be a stampede of thousands of panic-stricken Greeks with the time-honored accompaniments of starvation, fighting, and massacre; and when the first harvest of horror had been reaped in Thrace and in Asia Minor according to custom if there is a change of master in the Near East, when the full sovereignty of Turkey was once more established from Adrianople to Smyrna, then Greeks and Armenians would be left to enjoy the kind of government which the Bulgarians got from the Turks between 1870 and 1876, which the Macedonians have got from their successive rulers during the last twenty years, and which the Sinn Feiners got from Sir Hamar Greenwood and his Black-and-Tans.

We are back again in 1904 and the famous Mürsteg Programme. There is only one way in which the lives and liberties of subject populations in the Near East in the present condition of the world could be given any real protection. Their rights should be placed under international guarantee, and not a mere paper guarantee of the League of Nations. This was recognized and admitted even in the bad old days of the Mürsteg Programme, when the requirement that the Turks should accept European officers for the gendarmerie in Macedonia was intended to be the guarantee that Turkey would comply with her international obligations as regards her subject peoples. So to-day, during the transition period, only European officers for the gendarmerie in Eastern Thrace could make it certain that the re-establishment of Turkish rule will take place without the customary massacre. Similarly with regard to the permanent administration. If the minorities are placed under the protection of the League, there will be no real guarantee unless the League is given the power and the machinery, with at least resident Commissioners in the areas of mixed population, to see that the rights of the minorities are respected.

We have little hope that these guarantees will be, or even can be, taken from Turkey to-day. The system of 1904 and 1878 is so completely re-established in Europe that, like our fathers and our grandfathers, we have no alternative but impotence and acquiescence in evils on the one side, and war on the other. And it is important to be clear as to what is at the root of that system. In 1904, if the Mürsteg Programme had been carried out, as it easily could have been carried out, the Macedonians would have been saved. It was not carried out, because Turkey and the Macedonians were only used as pawns in the nationalist or imperialist policy of the Great Powers. For years Turkey had been a pawn in the Near Eastern rivalry of Russia and Britain; she had now become a pawn in the rivalry between Britain and Germany, and the Macedonian reforms and the Mürsteg Programme had to be defeated because Germany and Austria wanted to use Turkish friendship against Britain or France or Russia. Mr. George and M. Clemenceau re-established that system at Versailles in 1919, and it is having the same results in the Near East. France has her policy of friendship with the Turk and her secret agreements with regard to economic concessions. It is directed against Britain, which backs the Greeks against the Turks and the French. And the Paris Press, which at least has the merit of stating the “realities” in foreign politics, busily discusses the question whether Mr. George’s adventure has at last “detached” Italy from Great Britain, and whether

now France will have Italy on her side against Britain not only on the Near Eastern question, but also on the reparation question. For Italy too has her Near Eastern “policy” with its secret economic concessions and its claims to an economic zone of Adalia, Konia, and Aidin. And in this struggle of policies, and of the oil, the mining, the railway, and the other “interests” behind them, Turkey and her subject minorities have once more become a pawn, and with the old result that the Turk uses the rivalry of the Great Powers as the instrument of *his* policy. Just as eighteen years ago the Macedonians were sacrificed on the altar of Germany’s friendship, so to-day the Armenians and Greeks will be sacrificed on the altar of France’s friendship. In fact we might well slightly alter Canning’s words of 1815, and say: “Things are getting back to a wholesome state again; every nation for itself, and the devil take the hindermost.”

A TASK OF THE FUTURE.

THE Town-Planning Conference which is being held at Manchester this week has not excited much interest in the London Press. Yet it marks a stage in a movement which aims at nothing less than a revolution. It raises an issue which puts the Englishman’s genius for the ordering of his social life on its mettle. The map of England is at this moment a confusion; a confusion that looks wilful to anybody who regards the shape and complexion of a nation’s towns as any index to its tastes or its will. It is, in fact, less wilful than it seems. In societies with a tradition of military minds like Sweden, it was the natural thing for Governments to regulate and arrange the growth of the towns. But the English tradition at the time when the Industrial Revolution began to cover wide tracks of the countryside with little towns was the tradition of the eighteenth century: a tradition of easy, leisurely government, with little interference with the liberty, and still less with the property, of the classes that counted. So while Sweden was reviving the traditions of Gustavus Adolphus and passing Town-Planning Acts, Englishmen were patiently watching some of the most beautiful parts of England being crushed into a hideous kind of wilderness, where you looked in vain for the grace and color of the country or the dignity and self-consciousness of the town. Our ancestors did not say, as one might suppose, “Let us see how ugly and dispiriting we can make our surroundings”: they merely said, “There are more important things than beauty, space, air, and a wide range for man’s imagination in his social life; and these things are the rights of property and the general advantages of *laissez faire*.” The symbol of that spirit is Ancoats: the hideous prison of mean and repulsive streets, where men and women go to the market on Saturday night to buy for a few halfpence a wretched half-dead, captive bird, finding as they watch its life flicker out behind its bars some kind of assurance that they are not the forgotten outcasts from God’s world that they appear.

A few years before the war the spirit of protest against this abdication in favor of private interests and jerrybuilders, which had found impressive but disregarded voices in a Carlyle or a Ruskin or a William Morris, forced its way into politics. We need not put the excitement or the enthusiasm of the public on the subject too high. England never went wild over the idea that the English town might be a beautiful and agreeable place, as she went wild at different times over the religious quarrel in the schools or the question of

cheap food. Nothing is more striking in our history than the comparative indifference displayed by the classes that suffer most from our neglect of housing. A man who would revolt to-morrow if you touched his beer or his football will live in a pigstye for years without more than a grumble. The popular feeling helped the campaign for town-planning, but it has never helped very much, and the campaign was chiefly due to a few men of imagination and to a number of practical town and county councillors who, after they had spent a small fortune on clearing up the worst messes in their town, found a new district with all the same scandals tumbling into their midst. The Town-Planning Act of 1909 was the first recognition by Parliament of this problem. It was inadequate, as the first step in any such policy must be. It was followed ten years later by a second Act, under which it is obligatory on every Borough and Urban District Council with a population exceeding 20,000 to prepare a Town-Planning Scheme.

The term Town-Planning rather obscures the real character of the problem that confronts us. We are really faced with a gigantic task in reconstruction, not by town but by region. Thus the Conference at Manchester this week embraces more than seventy authorities. It is the sequel to a conference two years ago at which the representatives of these authorities set up a Joint Town-Planning Advisory Committee to prepare schemes for a fifteen-mile radius. We get some idea of the character of the problem if we glance at the task set the first Joint Town-Planning Committee in this country. This was the Committee organized in January, 1920, to deal with the development of the South Yorkshire coalfield in the Doncaster region. The subjects that were submitted for consideration to this Committee were as follows: (1) A proper scheme for the development and improvement of arterial roads. (2) The areas that should be reserved for housing and industry

respectively, so as to secure the most agreeable residential surroundings compatible with the interests of industry. (3) Open spaces that should be reserved for raising food and for recreation. (4) The approximate density of houses to be permitted in the various parts. (5) The location of civic centres.

Similar Committees have been established for the South Tees-side, the North and South Tyne-side, the Rotherham region, the Mansfield region, and the Wirral Peninsula. Dr. Addison remarks in an article in the "Manchester Guardian" that the London authorities have shown less public spirit and imagination, and that it has been difficult to secure their co-operation for such purposes. The town is no longer the unit of social life in such matters as the arrangements for transport, the supply of electricity, the choice of this or that place for industry, for housing, for recreation, the collective interests of groups of towns and villages in dealing with such nuisances as the smoke nuisance. Can we devise arrangements for securing joint action and joint development? The saving to the ratepayer's pocket will be enormous. The saving to the eye and the mind, the health and the comfort, will be still greater. It is really our genius for local government that is here on its mettle. In the fifteenth century, if Mrs. Green is to be believed, we showed ourselves eminently fitted for developing a vigorous and successful co-operative life in our towns. The town went to sleep in the eighteenth century. During the nineteenth century it was half asleep, so far as some of its vital interests were concerned. Have we enough of this genius now to make ourselves the masters of these new forces, or are we going to make nothing better in our social life out of electricity than our ancestors made out of steam? Time will show. Committees like the Manchester Committee and the Doncaster Committee are doing their best for us.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

By J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

CONSTANTINOPLE always returns to my mind as I first saw it, enveloped in a black pall of morning mist. In the distance, the palaces on the Bosphorus stood out yellow and clear in the fresh light, a faint glitter was on the nearer waters of the Golden Horn, thin pinnacles rose above the mass of black which held the city in its bosom, motor boats barked and darted out of the obscurity, trailing great flags. A strange, expectant mystery brooded over the scene. The air, the spirit, the staging were of the East, and I waited for something to happen. It happened with magic suddenness. The mist thinned and rolled away. The minarets, the domes, the cypresses of Stamboul, the piled houses of Pera, the myriad masts on the Golden Horn low down between, came out like a wizard's trick.

There are places—sometimes great cities like Rome, sometimes only buildings like the Tower of London or the castles of Edinburgh and Stirling—into which time and event have breathed the breath of life and they have become as living souls. We think of them as brooding over their past and looking upon the generation around them with the detachment of one whose thoughts are fixed elsewhere, or with the pity of one who endures in the midst of a world that is fussing, fuming, and passing into a shadow. They are too dignified to speak; they only muse and remember. Such is Constantinople. The bazaars and the streets are filled with an ever-flowing stream which finds a leisurely backwater in the cafés

where men toy with cigarettes, gossip, gamble, and let the hours run smoothly through their fingers, but Constantinople itself—the New Rome on its Seven Hills, the creation and glory of Emperors, that blazed in their triumphs and shuddered at their foul deeds, that proclaimed their pride and was ravaged by their fall—is remotely apart, inflexibly loyal in its heart and demeanor to the sovereign wills that honored it so long ago.

It is nearly twenty-six centuries since, in obedience to the Delphic oracle, the Greek adventurers who had come to found a colony in Thrace decided to be guided by the crow that flew away with a piece of their sacrificial offering and dropped it at the point of the peninsula where the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, and the Sea of Marmora meet. So there they founded their city. For sixteen of these centuries it has been a seat of Empire and a capital of Faith. No city of the world is like to it. The history of Imperial Rome is but a short span compared to the rule of Constantinople. The invasions, the sieges, the distresses of the one are but minor dramas compared to those of the other. Moreover, what scene in the long play of history rises higher in sheer dramatic power and completeness of technique than that of the Fall of Constantinople? What Act is so weirdly lit up by conflagration, made so barbaric by the struggles of men who fought with hate and lust and fear, so horrible with the cries and confusion of massacre, so tragically brought

to a climax as that enacted on the night of May 29th, 1453? Where else were such protagonists, such issues, such settings, brought together on such a stage? The darkness, the horror, the fire-gleams and sword-flashes that night, the voice of the conqueror confessing his creed whilst he sat on his horse pawing the dead bodies heaped on the floor of St. Sofia, and leaving a bloody handmark on the pillar upon which he leaned, still haunt the imagination of Christendom, admonish us in our political policies, and throw upon the sky of our faith a lurid glow that our hearts bid us believe is the promise of redemption and not only the sinking flare of a sacked city.

There are two spots in Constantinople that appeal with overpowering force to every one with a historical mind—the walls and St. Sofia.

The land walls cross the peninsula where it is about five miles in width. They have been called "the most colossal and pathetic relics of the ancient world that remain in Europe," and are worthy of the description. Woeful are they, battered by assault and earthquake and time, left to decay after that last attack in 1453, and yet not decaying. The heaps of weed-grown debris at their foot only serve to keep a sense of their stoutness. By the gate which is called Top Kapu, but is best known as St. Romanus, one can stand in the very breach made by the Turkish artillery where the Moslems rushed in over the body of the last of the unhappy Byzantine emperors. Gypsies and beggars importune, dance, and whine and crave for alms, but you are hardly conscious of their presence. With the walls, you slumber in the past. Outside are wastes, orchards, cypresses, places of burial, an odd building or two; inside, the mud and rubbish of the shrunk city. Dull and sorrowful they seem, outcast and neglected, because their work is done. For fifteen centuries they have stood, and like old warriors with children at their knees, they tell through every tower, every gate, almost every stone, of battle, of pomp, of cruelty. From the top you see the blue Balkan mountains, the Sea, the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, the city dipping down and rising up, the gathering-point for the commerce and the peoples of East and West, and your day and generation sink to but a heart-beat in the life of mankind.

St. Sofia dominates all. Near by is the space where the Hippodrome was wiped out for its iniquities; round it are the ruins of the grandeur of the ancient city; beneath it are the foundations of Byzantium with all their undisclosed treasures. Its gates are guarded against the proscribed infidel, and he who passes through is carefully scrutinized; in its courts lounge soldiers, gamblers, loafers, sightseers. Outwardly, it is dishevelled, confused, not a little disappointing. The careless world comes up to its doors—comes up, but does not pass within. Beyond its doors and curtains is an unjarred peace. The world holds no Holy Place like it. St. Peter's is never free from bustle and traffic, and is a disturbing mixture of elevation and vulgarity. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is dark, filthy, stifling. The Pantheon is sadly aged and bereaved, and is dead to the soul. In St. Sofia dwells the Holy Wisdom, silent, unembodied, but *there* in the vast space. Its secret is its free spaciousness. The church was founded on superstition, and, in the shadows of its pillars and the corners of its niches, superstition lurks waiting for the credulous to bring it forth, but it does not walk abroad in the great spaces. In them is nothing that binds you to the earth or to yourself. Truth does not even whisper to you there—it just is. St. Sofia is not an offering of the glad heart revelling in details; it is a dwelling-place of pure being. Let the creed which the devotees murmur there be what it may, the temple is the abode of the Eternal, the Unconditioned, the Unknowable.

When you venture to look at its wonders of marble, precious stones, and color, you see, like a hovering shadow through the wash and the inscriptions put on by hands doing homage to Allah and Mohammed, the benignant face and the symbols of Christ put there first of all by hands doing homage to God and His Son. This is indeed St. Sofia. It is a temple of the universal worship, neither church nor mosque, but something embracing both, and more spiritual than both. In Palestine, one has to escape from church and shrine and get out upon the hills of Judea, the road to Jericho, the waysides of Samaria, to feel the Presence. It dwells in St. Sofia.

Away across the Galata Bridge the tunnel tramway leads up to the European quarter where the West, infected by the sensuous luxuriousness of the East, is iridescent with putrefaction, where the bookshops are piled with carnal filth, and where troops of colored men in khaki can be seen in open daylight marching with officers at their head to where the brothels are. Thence one may well look across the inlet to the minarets of St. Sofia with pain and humiliation at heart. The gap between the best and worst thoughts and deeds of man is infinite in breadth and height, and a contest for the custodianship of holy places had better not be fought out too openly or at too close quarters.

One is reminded by the strange turnings of the wheel of fortune in these days of how often Constantinople has appeared to be tottering to its fall and to be ending its long existence as a seat of government. Russian, Bulgar, and Greek have coveted possession of its church for a thousand years. Diplomats and captains have time and time again assigned it as spoil to one or the other; but though much chastised by Fate and though once captured by an alien race and creed, it has never fallen from its high estate. Nor apparently is it to do so now. It has taken on the image of its conqueror and disavowed the people from whom it came. Its back is turned to Europe and the West, and its face to Asia and the East. The lights of rejoicing beam from the crescent-tipped minarets of St. Sofia to-day, and we of the West may feel disappointed that it is so. Yet those who love Constantinople and who put its shrine amongst the highest which Christian hands have ever made need not be disturbed. St. Sofia, with its indwelling spirit of spacious calm and freedom, belongs to the universal, and the city, holding in its keeping the richest and most awful memories of the grandeur and weakness of erring man, stands for a common human will, baffled in its triumphs and beautiful in its failures. Who is to possess them seems a trivial matter beside the desire that they may be reverently kept by a people who love them.

THE NEW FREE TRADE MOVEMENT.

BY THE SECRETARY OF THE COBDEN CLUB.

II.

THE efforts of the Cobden Club to carry out the instructions of the London Conference met with a good response. Free Trade organizations of one sort or another have sprung into existence within the last two years in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, and Austria—those in Germany and Hungary being especially vigorous and active. In Italy the great length of the peninsula makes it difficult for regular meetings of Free Traders to take place at any centre, and the organization there, as well as in Switzerland, rather takes the form of a league for economic liberation generally, including Free Trade, than of an *ad hoc* Free

Trade Union. Signor Eduardo Giretti and other ardent advocates, however, do their best by Press articles and the like to push forward the movement.

M. Droin, General Secretary of the "Ligue Suisse contre l'Etatisme et pour la Liberté Commerciale," has supplied me with an interesting account of the origin of the League. It appears that M. Marcus Wallenberg, visiting Geneva last year, gave to a meeting of business men in that city an account of the Swedish Association of Tax-Payers, of which he is President. They came to the conclusion that the conditions in Switzerland were so similar to those he described in Sweden that a similar organization should be started in the former country. At the same time, a Free Trade League was being formed in Berne, and the two bodies speedily amalgamated under the above title. Together they seem likely to develop into a strong organization, pledged, in the words of a manifesto they have issued, "to the most entire liberty in all commercial relations with foreign countries."

Probably the need for freedom of trade is felt more urgently in Austria than anywhere else, and the terrible state of that country is no doubt the reason why little progress has been made there. However, a plan is on foot for forming a Free Trade organization, and before this article appears it will probably have begun operations. Opinion is described to me as exceptionally favorable. The agricultural interest is now strongly Free Trade, and so are those industrialists who depend at all largely on their export trade. The only people who advocate "moderate" Protection are those whose market is entirely a home one. No one favors the continuance of high Protection.

It is in Germany and Hungary, however, that the most important progress has been made. In both countries aggressive and well-supported organizations have sprung up within the last two years. The Magyar Cobden Society (Magyar Cobden Szövetség) of Budapest well illustrates the spontaneous growth of Free Trade ideas in Protectionist lands. Nothing was known to me of any Hungarian movement of the kind until the time of the Third International Free Trade Congress at Amsterdam last autumn. When there, I received a manifesto from the new Society, with a request that it should be read to the delegates present. As no Hungarian delegate had appeared at the Congress, the manifesto was quite unexpected, but it soon became manifest that the new body was very influential indeed. Some of the principal statesmen of Hungary are among the leaders of the movement, which is supported by the Budapest Chamber of Commerce. Five branches have already been formed in different cities, and last winter a course of public lectures, delivered by leading statesmen and economists, was attended by audiences of 1,000 to 1,500. These lectures were afterwards published separately, and widely circulated in Hungary.

Meantime Herr Hermann Butzke, who had attended the interim Conference in 1920, had been working hard at the task of founding a German Free Trade League, and his efforts had resulted in the formation of a provisional committee of German Free Traders. This has now developed into the "Deutscher Freihandelsbund," founded on November 26th last, a body including amongst its members many of the leading statesmen and economists of Germany. It has two Secretariats, one covering all Germany north of the Main, and the other the country south of that river, while for all correspondence with foreign countries the acting Secretary is Herr Butzke of Berlin-Charlottenburg.

In September, 1921, the third official International Free Trade Congress was held at Amsterdam, at which the Cobden Club were in a position to present the scheme for a permanent international organization, with the preparation of which they had been charged at the

London Conference. The outlines of this scheme had been suggested by Professor Van Gijn, the President of the Dutch Free Trade League, who was responsible for the suggestion that the Cobden Club officers should, for the time being, act as officers of the International Committee. It was considered by a representative Committee of the nations present, and then submitted to the Conference in the form of a resolution, which was carried unanimously. The resolution read as follows:—

"That there shall be a permanent Committee, consisting of representatives of the Cobden Club and other British Free Trade Associations, together with representatives of the Free Trade organizations of other countries. The Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Cobden Club shall act for the present as the officers of this Committee, which shall arrange for future International Congresses and be authorized as an international body to submit resolutions to the League of Nations, and other organizations and authorities, for the development of friendly economic relations."

In pursuance of this resolution the "International Committee to Promote Universal Free Trade" came into existence, the constitution of which has been agreed to by the Free Trade organizations of Great Britain, the United States, France, Holland, Germany, and Italy.

Since this Committee was formed evidence has accumulated of the activity and vigor of the new organizations. Sir George Paish, who attended the Genoa Conference on behalf of the Cobden Club, met there representatives not only of the older Free Trade League of Holland, but of the newly formed "Deutscher Freihandelsbund" and of the Magyar Cobden Society. Both were anxious to hold International Conferences this year, and asked for the support of the new International Committee in calling them together. It was very late in the year to make preparations for one conference, let alone two, but the desperate state of Europe, and the eagerness of both bodies, had to be taken into consideration. As a result the British Free Traders consented to issue the invitations, and the Congresses are fixed to take place—that at Budapest to begin on October 17th, and that at Frankfurt on the 23rd of the same month.

Two things deserve consideration in this movement: its spontaneity and its prospects of success. The forthcoming conferences are different in origin from those that preceded them. The proposal for the first International Congress in 1908 came from the Cobden Club, and the delegates present, numerous and influential as they were, nevertheless came to London on the invitation of a Free Trade organization in a Free Trade country. At that Congress it was determined to hold similar gatherings every two or three years, but it was fully recognized that Free Traders were definitely organized in too few countries for it to be possible to form a permanent international body. The initiative was left, therefore, with the Cobden Club. A second Congress was held in Antwerp in 1910, and a third projected for Holland in 1914. This latter fell through owing to the war, and the third Congress did not take place till last year, in Amsterdam. The initiative, however, never came from a highly Protectionist country, even Belgium being only lightly protected. In this case, the order of proceedings is reversed, and the Conferences at Budapest and Frankfurt are due to pressure coming from Central European countries which, before the war, were highly Protectionist. The organized Free Traders in Germany and Hungary were eager for an international gathering in their own lands, and felt sufficiently strong to carry out the necessary work connected with it.

There is a change here pointing to a new driving force not available before the war. What is that force? First a widespread change in public opinion, not confined to Hungary and Germany. A leading Austrian, for instance, tells me that the only food taxes there now are those on tea, coffee, sugar, &c., only the last of which is

in any way Protective, the internal excise on sugar being lower than the import duty. This is a violation of Free Trade principles, not graver than many of which we ourselves are now guilty, yet it is arousing considerable opposition in that once highly Protectionist country. The Austrians before the war swallowed a camel; now, quite rightly, they strain at a gnat.

This change of feeling is in itself a good basis for a new Free Trade propaganda, but it is not the only reason for hoping for the success of the new movement. The virtually complete suspension of agricultural Protection, and the practical impossibility of restoring it, undermine the position of industrial Protection. Hopeless of Protection for their own produce, the rural populations are hardly likely to submit for long to Protectionist prices for the manufactures of the towns. European Protection, it is well known, arose from an alliance of the industrialists and the landowners, each willing to concede Protection to the other in return for a slice of "tariff pie" for themselves. Such a combination seems no longer possible, and the case of the consumer should at last have a chance of a hearing.

A London Diary.

LONDON, THURSDAY.

THE General Election is palpably near. Its date and circumstances depend on the power of recuperation and re-organization in the Conservative Party. They are, of course, sick to death of Lloyd George. They see now what a fatal stranger they entertained in 1916, and they pant for freedom. But they are in a difficulty. The Cabinet is not a real political entity. But so long as it remains in being, it must, in a sense, be dominated by the Prime Minister, much the ablest political manipulator of our time. This means that their honestest but not their strongest politician, who is Mr. Austen Chamberlain, is muzzled by his sense of loyalty and his inability to stand up to his Chief. The other clever men (with the exception of Mr. Baldwin) are arrivists, and Churchill, the most brilliant of them, while now wholly detached from personal intimacy with the Prime Minister, happens to be the prime mover in the fiasco of his Eastern policy, and forced, therefore, to defend it. All depends on the vigor of the rank and file (not merely of the Die-Hards, who are too fanatical), and their political sense and resolution to be free of a fatal entanglement. Their strong point is that Lloyd Georgism is no longer an asset but a liability, that Mr. George is a vote-losing agency, and that the cleverer he seems to be, the more the country distrusts him. Only they don't want to be caught disorganized, and to become a figure in the triumph of Labor. A strong man would sweep them into line. But there is no strong man. Theirs must be a soldiers' battle.

LLOYD GEORGE'S line is obvious. He will try and hive back to Liberalism. The choice of Manchester for the scene of his speech, with the friendly if sadly doubting "Guardian" at hand, is conclusive of that tactic. I suppose there will be an invocation of Gladstone (against his son), and the author of the ruin of the Greeks and the return of the Turk to Europe will invite comparisons with the great moralist whose work on the public conscience he has helped to spoil. The implication

of this will be that if the Liberal Party wants Mr. George, it can have him. I should not bid at that auction. If politics were a football field, and Liberalism and Toryism a contest of "Spurs" and "Wolves," I suppose I should. But I would rather leave our Great Professional alone with his laurels.

HOWEVER, the song of the situation for the embarrassed duettists of Manchester and Birmingham is already made out for them. Mr. Chamberlain must mutter a sham Disraelism; Mr. George flute a sham Gladstonianism. The intention will be to keep the two audiences—the Liberal and the Tory—in humor with each other as long as possible, if perchance they can be got to rally to some uniting cry, such as "Down with Socialism." That is unlikely. The Conservative Conference next month is doomed to declare an end to the Coalition. And to dissolve before that—even if it were possible in time—would mean a general faction fight in which Mr. Lloyd George's candidates would go down before the "charge" of the exasperated Die-Hards, and the desertion of the Middle Conservatives. But the latter want a leader. As they cannot have one, they may put up with an Umbrella. This would naturally be Lord Balfour. He has been a Prime Minister—not a very good one perhaps. But then he is always willing to become one again, and to step over any intervening obstacle in the way of old colleagues with much delicacy and success. Looking forward, I should have said that Mr. Baldwin was the coming Conservative man. He is skilful, a good worker, and a good speaker. He is also reputed to be as strong for peace as any member of the Cabinet, and to have made a better impression on his colleagues during its debates than either its Chief or his lieutenant in the Commons. But for the moment it will be Lord Balfour—or Lord Derby, who will step to the front. And even that evolution will take time.

It is hard to call for roses and be received with a hail of brickbats, and Mr. George's Sunday newspapers must have given him matter for a theme on the fickleness of man. But let him reflect. When Lord Rothermere and Mr. Garvin demand the Prime Minister's head, they doubtless obey a desire to be well in with the crowd. But their scent of a public danger is a true journalistic instinct. In the middle period of the war, Mr. George's personality was supposed, rightly or wrongly, to count on his country's side. It may be that when the history of that time comes to be written, it will reverse this judgment. But there is no reasonable ground for doubt as to its influence on the politics of the hour. If England wants to recover some of her lost ground in Europe, she must have done with the Prime Minister.

I CITE two recent witnesses. One is a journalist of no marked prepossessions, fresh from a visit to Central and East Central Europe. He was conclusive on one point: "French policy is generally disapproved; British policy is thought to be much more helpful, peaceful, and constructive. But L.G.'s personality is thought to be its greatest handicap." My second witness is a diplomatist of much experience and of marked friendliness to England, which he knows only less well than he knows France. "You are mistaken about French policy," he said. "Poincaré does not speak well; but he speaks in the main to keep a highly Nationalist Chamber in order. Behind him there is a serious and growing opinion" (he gave some representative examples among political and military

people of importance) "which hates the idea of a difference with England, and is also convinced of the necessity of Germany and France becoming—well, not friends, but on a good understanding with each other, based on a prosperous and contented Germany, not a mutilated one. They want *some* German money—they know they cannot get all they ask—and then they will be fairly satisfied. The great obstacle is Lloyd George. His confidants are most indiscreet and do great harm with the Paris world. But, above all, he is thought to be playing a *game* against France, after having given her *carte blanche*, and more even than she asked, under the Treaty. He is hated, and he makes things difficult for an English-French-German Entente, which is the only hope." For the moment I do not criticize this view. I state it as important and representative.

HARINGTON is very much the man of the hour, for in its trouble the nation was lucky in finding a soldier who happened to be a statesman. His repute in the Army was as an organizer and an intellectual. In that capacity he literally pulled the soldiers out of the mud at Passchendaele, adding to Plumer's character the gifts of a cool, steady mind, and a substantial genius for a large affair and for detail. The situation was awful. The whole business was a forced operation, its object the salvation of the French Army, and in the midst of it the rain converted the manœuvring ground into a swamp, in which men and their machines floundered or sank. But so well did Harington manage that he gave Ludendorff the impression that we had done quite well, too well for any German to find advantage from the battle. Almost before it was over, Harington was hurried off to Italy.

THE Marquis de Soveral was so much a character in London society that his Ambassadorship seemed not to be the cause of his being there, but merely an amusing accident of his sojourn. His close companionship with King Edward was, I suppose, the foundation of his fame, but he would have been a tremendous find anywhere. The famous caricature of him was actually a likeness; and to see a perfect dandiacal body crowned with the swarthy, roguish oval of his face, with its eye-glass, thick, bristled, and curled moustache, blue-black like his hair, and black, round, humorously lit eyes, was such a surprise when it first dawned on me that I could not keep my eyes off the famous man. But the impression of a curious or exotic appearance gave way at once to the pleasure derived from his smiling address and charming good nature. He was not, I suppose, a deeply wise man, or a witty or a cultured one. But the grace of amiability could not be more bounteously expressed.

MARIE LLOYD belonged to the line of the great music-hall artists who were essentially, like Dickens, men and women of the people, interpreters of their types, humors, oddities, thoughts, and ways of life. I always thought Bessie Bellwood the greatest of these impersonators. Perhaps she was not so witty as Marie; but she had an unrivalled power of figuring in a moment, with a twist of her hair, and a curl of her bonnet, some shape of the cockney underworld, and creating for it sympathy and understanding. Such artists made their own plays of the street or the household, unroofing the dwellings of the people as they passed, and showing the men and women who abode there. Thus at the

moment when the theatre was most unreal, the music-hall was most real, and contained, though few seemed to realize it, the best dramatic art of the time.

HOLIDAY moods:—

Nine-tenths of what is horribly known as "extempore" prayer is the Pharisee's soliloquy over again.

Most good men attain to the pain of virtue, not to the happiness of it.

The Church of England has the advantage over rival Churches that while its fixed service can be understood, it is also beautiful; its ritual language being poetic and mysterious, and yet coming home to the general mind; and that its priesthood is now increasingly detached from class. Its disadvantage is that since the Reformation it has not been and cannot be united.

Youth lives without reason, age without love. The middle period is the arena of their conflict.

The public speech of politicians is of the demerits of their foes; their private talk of those of their friends.

IN its last week's issue THE NATION inadvertently did an injustice to the "Westminster Gazette." That journal, like the "Mail," gave a clear indication of the official source of the alarmist news of the week before last.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

THE BURLESQUE OF BEAUTY.

IN one of her solemn essays George Eliot complained that the younger generations were making fun of everything. Nothing was sacred, nothing safe against their irreverent laughter. They made jokes upon the most serious subjects, and cast ridicule over the noblest works of art and poetry. Gloomily she foreboded the time when even such a piece of work as "Hamlet" would not escape burlesque; for had she not heard of a wicked travesty called "Little Doctor Faust," then being enacted at the Gaiety playhouse, where "the lamp of burlesque" was always kept burning? If we remember right, she called her essay "Depreciating the Moral Currency," and even in England, to say nothing of Austria and Russia, we have been learning what the depreciation of currency means. Yet the wise lady need not have troubled her heart with these serious apprehensions. We are not sure whether "Hamlet" has been burlesqued; we rather think it has. But if it has, what difference has it made to the value of the tragedy? If Polonius has been seen leading a drunken revel more honored in the observance than the breach; if Ophelia has danced like a Columbine, madly scattering her rosemary and rue; and if Hamlet has discovered that the Ghost was the trick of a Spiritualist Séance, the drama of "Hamlet" has not lost one word of its magnificence, one touch of its power over the soul. To say that nothing kills like ridicule is true enough, but anything that ridicule can kill must have been born mortal. One or two ageing playgoers may remember "Little Doctor Faust." Goethe's "Faust" is known throughout the world.

Burlesque is shortlived, but we could excuse it on other grounds besides its transience. There is a pleasure in laughing at, or even in abusing, a thing we love—the pleasure of a mother who calls her baby a "little

rogue" or a "young rascal." Perhaps it is one among the motives that make even grave people inclined to laugh in church, and imitate a man in the pulpit whom they would never imitate in the street. It may be the pleasure of slacking off a tension that is growing too high—the pleasure of "relaxation," as we say. "I couldn't help but laugh," said a spectator describing the anguish of women at a London dock when the news of a terrible shipwreck came in; and, as an extreme case, the writer has known men laugh when a shell took off a comrade's head. When the Dorset woman in the "Dynasts" was told that Napoleon "do eat pagan infants when he's in the desert," she replied:—

"Whether or no, I sometimes—God forgive me!—laugh wi' horror at the queerness o't, till I'm that weak I can hardly go round house. He should have the washing of 'em a few times; I warrant 'a wouldn't want to eat babies any more!"

In something of the same spirit Max Beerbohm excuses his laughter at the genius burlesqued in his series of caricatures called "Rossetti and his Circle." "Rather a ribald book?" he inquires. "Well, *on se moque de ce qu'on aime*." It is a terrible moment for a child when it discovers that the grown-up people who surround it like rather elephantine gods are liable to moments of human weakness; but still the child may feel a certain delight in the discovery—a slightly malignant delight, if it is a naughty child. To detect our common foibles, weaknesses, vanities, absurdities, temptations, and concessions to temptation lurking beneath the formidable reputation of the great and good does add a certain pleasure to our appreciation of their greatness and goodness. And with it goes that sense of relief and relaxation of which we spoke. To see those minds of dominating genius confronted with the ridiculous situations of our everyday life, and making fools of themselves just like the rest of us—what a joyful sense of companionship it suggests! What a charming bond of fellowship with grandeur! "It is a man's errors that make him lovable," said Goethe, and genius cannot be excluded from that communal affection. That is why we are all so charmed with a book like this.

There can be no doubt about the genius here burlesqued. Both in literature and painting, the little circle of friends gathered round Gabriel Rossetti in 1848 exercised an amazing influence upon the following years—an influence that lingered up to the further revolution of the present century. The circle was small at first. In his account of it (1901), William Rossetti limited the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to Gabriel Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Millais, and (perhaps in a somewhat minor degree) Woolner. Their ages varied from nineteen to twenty-two, Woolner being the eldest. "The temper of these striplings," William Rossetti continues, "after some years of the current academic training, was the temper of rebels; they meant revolt, and produced revolution":—

"They hated the lack of ideas in art, and the lack of character. . . . They hated those forms of execution which are merely smooth and prettyish, and those which, pretending to mastery, are nothing better than slovenly and slapdash, or what the P.R.B.'s called 'sloshy.' Still more did they hate the notion that each artist should not obey his own individual impulse, act upon his own perception and study of Nature, and scrutinize and work at his objective material with assiduity before he could attempt to display and interpret it; but that, instead of all this, he should try to be 'like somebody else,' imitating some extant style and manner, and applying the cut-and-dried rules enunciated by A from the practice of B or C. They determined to do the exact contrary."

At the time these methods seemed startling, though they suggest no paradox now. The artists' minds, we

are told, were to furnish them with subjects for works of art, and with the general scheme of treatment; Nature was to be their one or their paramount storehouse of materials; the study of her was to be deep, and the representation in the highest degree exact. It seems strange, but we are assured on William Rossetti's authority that Ruskin was at that time unknown to all except perhaps to Holman Hunt, who may have read the first two volumes of "Modern Painters." But Ruskin was soon to become the great apostle of the Brotherhood, and into the circumference of the circle many other famous names, then quite unknown, were quickly gathered: Christina Rossetti, Ford Madox Brown, William Bell Scott, Coventry Patmore, and a few less famous contributors to "The Germ." That notable publication ran to only four numbers (January to May, 1850), and only the first two bore its appropriate name; the others were called "Art and Poetry, being Thoughts towards Nature." But we cannot wonder that it germinated; for it contained the early versions of "My Sister's Sleep," "The Blessed Damozel," some of Rossetti's sonnets on pictures, some poems by Christina Rossetti (under the name of Ellen Alleyn), a criticism of "The Strayed Reveller, by A." (Matthew Arnold's first published poems), and (what seems rather out of place) a long review, with copious quotations, of Clough's "Bothie."

After the decease of the periodical, the circle continued to grow till it included Ruskin, William Morris, George Meredith, Burne-Jones, Whistler, and Swinburne among its most celebrated names. One might perhaps add Browning, for he was the poet most worshipped by the friends, though Tennyson was not despised by them, as some young critics affect to despise him now. It is into this charmed and almost saintly circle, so deeply inspired, so ethereally religious in its aspect of art, that Max intrudes his smiling irony, penetrating the joints of hallowed armor, and laughing at what he loves. For the portraits, he tells us, he used old drawings, early photographs, and the accounts of eye-witnesses. "But these have not been my only aids. I have had another and surer aid, of the most curious kind imaginable." He promises to tell us all about it some day, if we care to hear. It will be amusing to hear, no doubt, but there is no need to tell. The result is, in any case, astonishing, and the present writer, who says so, knew in his youth nearly every one of these laughable and glorious figures very well by sight. For the ironic smile at its gentlest perhaps one might choose that perfect picture of Jowett, all childlike irony himself, watching Rossetti paint the scenes of Arthurian legend that still fade upon the walls of the Oxford Union, and meekly inquiring: "And what were they going to do with the Grail when they found it, Mr. Rossetti?" Or should we take William Morris ("Topsy") and Burne-Jones "settled on the settle in Red Lion Square," the settle decorated with the loveliest angels, a loaf of bread and a bottle of Bass on the wooden table, a broom in the corner? Or again, George Meredith, in all the exuberance of a Phœbus Apollo, as Lord Morley has described him in his reminiscences, bursting in upon Rossetti, who sits painting from a lackadaisical model, while Meredith insistently exhorts him "to come forth into the glorious sun and wind for a walk to Hendon and beyond." That "to Hendon and beyond" is about the finest touch of irony among the many. But almost equally fine is the picture of John Morley introducing Mill to the artist and suggesting a series of illustrative paintings for Mill's new work, entitled "The Subjection of Women." Yes, perhaps that picture, together with Morley's speech upon the subject, is the very finest of all. Unless, indeed, one looks for a touch of cruelty in burlesque, as in that terrible

picture of the young Millais beholding a vision of his future self; or that of Browning revealing by his hat and his thumb just that touch of snobbism and vulgarity with which he was charged; or that of Leighton as "A Man from Hymettus," exquisitely decorated with cane and yellow gloves, addressing to Rossetti's slippered feet and wrinkled trousers the sort of mellifluous trash we used to listen to at the Royal Academy banquets, when the Adonis of the Galleries rose up to orate; or that final one of Oscar Wilde causing the name of Rossetti to be heard for the first time in the United States, while the puzzled farmers and their wives gaze in bovine bewilderment at the lecturer and his lily, a portrait of Lincoln scowling from the wall.

Of all the figures thus represented in burlesque, John Morley and Hall Caine (in this at least alike) are, we fear, the only two now living. But to the young the book will come as a true memorial of an age which they may revolt against, but can never afford to forget; and to those who can recall that heavenly time, itself so full of revolution, it will come as a reminder of noble enthusiasms and a wholehearted devotion to beauty—a reminder no less welcome for the relief of its laughter.

TWO DAYS.

THE poet who is in us all pursues a double quest when making the familiar rare and the rare familiar. We found it was so from a two-days' walk through part of Surrey and Hampshire in May; but it was not until weeks afterwards that we understood why the enchantment of that walk, so well worn in memory, was kept stainless "with something of an angel light." Throughout hours lit, it seemed, as brightly by the mild effulgence of the crowded hawthorns as by the shafts of a remote sun, things unfamiliar were gathered into common experience, and what was expected, old and firm in intercourse of years, put on new fashions of surprise. The human element was the real cause—"ours is her wedding garment"—and the reflection from it is what we want to describe.

Water Crowfoot is no rare ranunculus, but on the swifter streams its masses were pressed and kneaded by the action of the water into patterns both sinuous and angular, an odd lettering on the water, as though the stream sought to write the record of its travels and all it had seen upon them. The one cypress that we saw by the water-meadows of the Itching, sacred to the Water-Avens, was deciduous; the noble lime avenue near the ugly brick turbine-driven mill where the house-martins peeped fat cheeks out of their clay tenements belonged to Percy Bysshe Shelley, horse-dealer; the only cuckoo was cut in yew; the only pimpernel was the starry yellow, and the only celandine the greater.

Near Frensham Ponds we came upon a large sand-martins' colony in a disused sand-pit, and truly here, in so simple and wanted a blessing of the countryside, was room for the most curious speculation upon the history of the world and the riddles of its life. A friend of ours spends hours of solitary thought upon the genesis of the bookworm, the clothes-moth, and the mealworm. What were they, how did they, and whence came they when there were no ground meal, no clothing, and no paper? Sir Thomas Browne could hardly ask a more searching question, and the foolish cleric, tirading against evolution, has never thought of it! Nor did a like problem occupy the mind of Gilbert White as he pondered over his "Hirundines." Yet it is surely passing strange that the swallows, the swifts, and the house-martins in

all their millions utterly abandoned their ancient ways and homes in a yesterday so trifling remote as six or seven thousand years ago, a revolution made without need or pressure, a wonder of transformation. But the sand-martins went digging on, serenely oblivious of man, digging as they had dug since they were sand-martins. Perhaps they tried their bills against the Babylonian bricks, or the instinct for burrowing held and strangled the mighty impulse for change. Nor, as we went on, could we be sure which was the more moving, the change or the continuance.

The Tormantil, solitary on the burnt heath, shone like hope in a drudgery of resignation; the Pompillius, dragging its frozen meat over the turf, was a Robin Hood for helpless young rather than a common despoiler; and the Puella dragon-flies and the Demoiselle in pomp of peacock-blue, more plentiful in the open woodlands of Surrey than almost anywhere in England, were a democracy of royal blood. The Dionysiac cuckoos played their hidden revels as we walked, and the Siren-like bubbleings of the hen bird were answered by the frantic "cuckoo-cuck-cuck-cuckoos" of her paramours—sounds unbridled and full of a panting, wild desire, a scarlet of nature run into her tenderer dyes. The softly brooding, inflected monotone of the "brown eve-jar" is the footbridge between day and night, and between each shadow-bar gleams a darkly shining water in which each mingles. But the "rattle-notes" are not "unvaried," as Meredith says; the bridge is on three levels. Not only does the pitch thus rise and fall, but there are subtle differences both in emphasis and speed, and the rhythm undulates in gentle slopes and from a quickening to a delaying, as though day and night paused and swayed in meeting before the rush of sweet surrender, each to each.

Among other scenes where skylarks abound we have seen them, when the sun's rays swept the ground almost horizontally, standing in them and singing. The cadence was more tranquil, broken, and desultory than the air song, and lacked the liquid notes interpenetrating it like bright flowers in waving grasses. But as we came up over the lip of the Punch-Bowl an eccentric skylark appeared singing or uttering on the top of a holly, an outlandish thing to see and song to hear on any other tree, a discord of nature, but in queer harmony, through the shrill and guttural notes, with the stiff armature and scintillations of the holly leaves. We found a partridge's nest arched over by a ring of sapling birches on the common with sixteen eggs in the grassy cup, the color of a haystack in shadow and of sand after rain—and a reed-bunting's hidden so warmly in the heart of a tussock of long grasses on the fringe of stream and briar-tangled marsh that it seemed as though earth had parted her hair to receive a treasure so choice. But the best of all was a grey wagtail's nest, from which the birds had flown, on the bank of Itching's chalky stream. A swirl of root fibres and dried grasses lined with hairs and built underneath the hatches two feet above the torrent; surely the wagtail, wearing the golden dress of the sun on his breast and its golden joy on his spirit, had turned to the twists and eddies of the water for the contrivance of his home. Thus, as the first day melted into night and out of the night grew the bright flower of the day after, common things became a lovely mystery, and things uncommon were possessed and made permanent and, unlike the beauty that withers in the frailty of its own grace, our own for ever.

But the wood-wren, fairest of the three leaf-warblers, was alone empowered, whether by constant nature or by the virtue of these two days, to interweave this duality of experience in the complex harmony of his own being. All these things led up to him and drew their meaning

from him. He is less abundant than chiff-chaff or willow-wren, being purely a hamadryad, a genius of the woodland, preferably beech, but also oak, birch, and groves of larch. When he arrives in mid-April, and later than his warbler kin, he has timed his coming with the ringing-up of the true spring, when the young beech leaves are in his own plumage to welcome him. For he is green with the earth and golden with the restored light of heaven, a very symbol of their blending, and as he drifts to and fro and up and down among the leaves he seems discarnate, as though their soft, eager flutterings and whisperings had shaken out this Presence, informed with the life of spring and free of their fetters.

The wood-wren's song has a prelude of a few notes, measured, lucid, and of equal stress, followed by a main figure which runs the strokes through into a rapid, descending cadence of a heightened emotional value, and ending on a sustained trill. The raindrops patter into a shower and cease in a fluttering sigh of the wind. Then, after a longer or shorter interval of silence, a single, high, melodious note peals out upon the air of a totally different character in mood, tone, and quality from everything that went before, in our experience usually repeated eight times, though sometimes fewer, and, again, as many as fourteen. As the spring wears out its girlishness this bewitching note tends to be uttered less and less frequently, until by the end of June or the beginning of July it is heard no more. The prelude is often sung on the wing, and Hudson says that the long, somewhat falcon-like wings beat time to it. Not only are the wings shivered in the ecstasy of the trill, but the tail vibrates like a struck wire, while the bill is open to the full and the mandibles quake with the intensity of utterance.

Hudson says truly of this "long, passionate trill—the woodland voice that is like no other," that it is "like the diffused sound of the wind in the foliage concentrated and made clear." So, he says, "it is really beyond criticism—one would have to begin by depreciating the music of the wind." Perhaps this is why Gilbert White has little more to say of the wood-wren than that "this last haunts only the tops of trees in high beechen woods, and makes a sibilous, grasshopper-like noise now and then at short intervals, shaking a little with its wings when it sings"; why the ornithologists in their turn tell us little more of the bird than that the nest, unlike the chiff-chaff's and the willow-wren's, is not lined with feathers; and why other folk who know other birds hardly notice him at all. But, heard attentively, the music of the wood-wren, which is like sun and leaves and wind and rain and shadows mingled and interfused, gives them spirit and a new harmony, and interprets them to the music of our own souls made conscious. We see and listen to him with open eyes and ears, and so through him the glow and murmur of the woodlands. And in the gladness of his trill the whole spring seems to shiver and draw our spirit into an equal joy. When we heard it on our walk it seemed like a folk-song, traditional, familiar but forgotten, and, when sung again, awakening an intuitive memory to a response of sweet surprise.

But the single note that follows the trill, low yet so melodiously round, clear, and penetrating that it can be heard a quarter of a mile away, produced an effect the very reverse. It was everywhere with us through the Surrey woodlands, but it had nothing in common with other single notes uttered from them or above them—neither with the full-flavored whistle of the nuthatch, nor the mounting fervor of the nightingale's flaming prelude, nor the repeated cry of the skylark's hosanna. It was a something detached from daily associations, a

visitation, as though a horn of elfland had found its way to the sensual ear again and yet again. And it was everywhere with us, and near and far, however low, through long hours of the soft-treading day it lasted, this tiny peal from a world within a world. Thus, exquisitely, on those two days of May, common things and rare were interchanged.

Contemporaries.

MARIE LLOYD.

It was a surprise to find that suburban music-hall was full. We had heard that its programme had become like the dingy volumes of old illustrated papers in a doctor's waiting-room—entertainment that might provide distraction for those unlucky enough to be there. But one does not go anywhere simply for the fun of looking at uninteresting and obsolete things. Instead (so we heard), people now flocked to the picture-palaces; the public taste had changed; what filled the halls of entertainment to-day was the attraction of endless photographs of sentiment and romance moving to dance measures from mechanical pianos. "House full?" we said incredulously to the Admiral at the door. "If you want to see Marie Lloyd," he replied, "you'll 'ave to stand."

That was disappointing. Well, we had heard she was worth it. When we were young we had seen men put their heads together, and although it was impossible to hear the good news which clearly gave them deep satisfaction, we do know it concerned an attractive young lady named Marie Lloyd. Several times in later life stories were outlined to us, merely shadowed forth, as it were, because they were the copyright of this lady, and they made us ready to believe she had character. And then, again, we had heard it reported, in the age before the war, that when Marie Lloyd's turn was announced at a West-end hall, it would herald also a little procession, to seats which till that instant had been left vacant and unamused by the fun, of judicious young artists, authors, and dramatists, men who, to-day, are famous and middle-aged. When Marie Lloyd had finished, these men delicately departed. It may seem curious to us who have merely heard idle tales of this lady, and do not altogether approve of them, to learn that her appearance at a hall coincided with a visit there from the cultured and fastidious. Anyhow, all that is London gossip, and although our suburban hall was full, we were not too fastidious, for it was a wet night.

By all accounts, too, Marie Lloyd, though gifted in all the arts of femininity, would be getting on, like ourselves. Who could say whether even now this was a chance of seeing her? When we thought it over, that seemed doubtful. How could we expect it? She was famous long before we ever entered a music-hall. But the Admiral might be right. The house was certainly full; it was a dim sea of humanity, restless and confident, mysterious and potent, murmuring its secrets; half-terrifying, as such a living mass, with its primeval and unreasoned promptings, must always be. This was the people; an artist would give his best years to learn what magic word would control the tides of this sea.

A lanky figure in a tiny bowler hat, trousers too short, coat sleeves remote from his wandering hands, a cane and a red nose, appeared in the square of light beyond. He walked round in agitation several times, and then stopped to inform us that his wife had gone away with the lodger. He made a song about it. Nobody seemed to care very much. Another man came on and jeopardized some dinner plates. A kilted figure appeared, whose recommendation probably was his

Scotch accent; it is the only suggestion we can make. There was a superb lady in evening dress who sang a hymn of love and renunciation. The audience remained quite nice and kind. What the rest was we forget. There was some hesitation on the part of the management, and presently the number 10 appeared on the electric tell-tale.

The audience stirred in mass, and seemed to be settling itself. The orchestra played an air the house appeared to know quite well, whatever it was, and a figure in an absurd caricature of the kind of frock a naughty lady is supposed to wear moved with nonchalance to the footlights. There was a merry call from the gods. She sang them a song in easy confidence of their approval, making hardly a movement, except of a beautiful arm and hand, or an indication of an ankle such as a woman might give who knows well how to dance, but is only going to tantalize us. This was Marie Lloyd. Nothing was certain of her at first except that the tides of that dim sea were under her control. As to that power, however, she seemed as indifferent as a monarch should be. Her presence was sufficient. She lifted slightly her cloud of silk, mocked us with the prelude to a dance, and walked away with the grace that not all royalty is born to. As she disappeared she turned her eyes, and looked at us.

The sudden concordance of the audience was not a surprise. It is possible that we were in that cry. Should we be dumb when taken unaware by a good thing? If this was elderly Marie Lloyd, then she was eternal youth. Age she would never know. We were vaguely glad that we were there. We had heard of Rabelaisian stories. What we had seen was a hint—no more than that—of those things that are lovely and of good report.

But when she next appeared we must confess we were hardly prepared for her. We felt we had not seen her till that moment. It has been rightly said that after seeing Marie Lloyd one has a new respect for the London flower girl, the lady of the fried-fish shop, and the wife of the gentleman who keeps his own barrow. In her new character, and before she had spoken, she was the embodied genius of the Cockney. Is that a little thing? Then Sam Weller is nothing. Consider those who have attempted the Cockney, whether in acting or in print. They have failed, almost all of them. They have failed because the Cockney, though a sentimentalist, protects his easy pity with an almost impenetrable derision; and it is not a loud derision, but the still mask of the weary cynic. There is something Chinese about the Cockney, the result perhaps of both the antiquity of his civilization and its stress. He is now an hereditary unbeliever. He is not going to be moved any more. The gods have upset his apple barrow too often. That has ceased to be amusing, but it has given him patience, and his philosophy a bleak humor. He loves his fellow men, but he has no faith in them; he has seen too many of them, and too much.

How did Marie Lloyd convey all this, and more? If that could be explained we should know the secrets of the great artist. Perhaps it was not the things she did and said, but what she did not say, and did not do. As a Cockney lady who somehow had missed a moving job, for her own household was flitting, she would hesitate in an explanation, tongue-tied, and at once we knew everything. Or she would, failing her ability to understand her own mind, ask us an innocent question which revealed some secrets of humanity. No wonder the audience laughed. There we were, incarnate on the stage. We laughed at ourselves. But when it came, not to life's fine points, such as the way one feels after several calls on the road in the hope of getting good cheer, but to life's essentials, Marie Lloyd's deranging candour was as wicked as Falstaff's. Such a sally would shock the house into a surprise so deep as to be a silence—just before it roared. We had heard the truth, and we knew it.

Communications.

THE DE BEUCKELAERE TRIAL.

To the Editor of THE NATION & THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—It must be the holiday season which has prevented any reports appearing in the English Press of the De Beuckelaere trial in Belgium, which, after having been protracted over some weeks, ended in the acquittal of the accused. Of all the political trials which have followed in the wake of the Great War in Belgium none had attracted so much public attention, none roused such indignation among the Flemish people. Dr. De Beuckelaere was one of the leaders of the young extreme Flamingant "Front Party," so called because it was largely composed of ex-Service men whose Flemish sentiments had been outraged by the conditions prevailing in the Belgian army. The Front Party, which was formed as an entirely new political organization soon after the Armistice, succeeded in capturing four seats at the first general election. It is the first exclusively Flemish party in the history of Belgium. The main strength of the Flemish movement still resides in the Flemish sections of the great Belgian parties, especially of the Catholic and Socialist Parties, but a certain timidity has always been the result of this lack of separate organization, and the Front Party, even in the eyes of many moderate men, played a very useful part in setting a quicker pace for the whole movement. The distinguishing feature of its programme is that it asks for "administrative separation" of the French and Flemish parts of the country, or, as it is also put, for "Home Rule for Flanders." In "Belgicist" circles, in the Brussels Ministerial departments, whose anti-Flemish spirit filters through in that strongly centralized country, in all the ramifications of the bureaucracy and the judicature, the Front Party was looked upon with the greatest suspicion and hatred. From the beginning, Flemings of all creeds and parties have stoutly maintained that the prosecution of Dr. De Beuckelaere, and his arrest on November 10th of last year, on the eve of the second general election, was a political move with the object of ruining the Front Party. As a matter of fact, Dr. De Beuckelaere himself, snatched from the midst of his election campaign and imprisoned on a sensational charge of treason, was not re-elected, but his party maintained its strength of four seats in the Chamber; and now, of course, his acquittal, which made an even greater sensation than did his arrest, has restored the young Flamingant leader (Dr. De Beuckelaere, like several more of the prominent Frontists, is in the early thirties) to a political future of wide possibilities.

Dr. De Beuckelaere was prosecuted, three years after the Armistice, on account of his alleged activities during the war, when he was at the Yser front with the rank of corporal. He was charged before a court-martial with various treasonable actions, with having undermined the loyalty of Belgian soldiers and citizens, with having transmitted, or caused to have transmitted, useful information to the enemy, and with having supported the enemy's plans. In reality the prosecution sought to prove that Dr. De Beuckelaere had been, under the curious historical title of *Ruwaard*, the leader of the secret Flamingant organization which is known to have existed at the front, and to which it imputed "defeatist" and subversive aims, in particular making it responsible for a number of desertions which occurred in 1918 in a certain army division. The army authorities had all along suspected Corporal De Beuckelaere's connection with the secret organization which caused them so much anxiety in the last winter of the war, but they never succeeded in obtaining proofs, or why should they have waited till last year before opening proceedings against him? The fact is that about that time new evidence, or what had to pass as such, was put in their hands. A certain Dr. Wullus had published, under the pseudonym "Rudiger," a couple of books, "*Le livre noir de la trahison activiste*" and "*Flamenpolitik*," written in the most extreme partisan tone, in which accusations of treason were recklessly flung against numbers of quite moderate and generally respected Flamingants, which were greatly boomed by the chauvinist Brussels Press, especially by "*Le Soir*."

The authorities called a large number of witnesses to speak to their presumptions against the accused. To anybody used to English methods of criminal procedure the *défilé* of these witnesses *à charge* was a most extraordinary spectacle. Practically all of them began by saying that they knew nothing definite against the accused, but they were, nevertheless, allowed to dilate at length on their suspicions, on tittle-tattle which they had heard, on conversations which somebody else had told them that he had had with the accused. A very bad impression was created in Flanders by the appearance of quite a number of generals, colonels, and captains, who, although the language in which the trial was held was Flemish, all without an exception spoke French, and who, most of them, gave vent to the very crudest views on the Flemish movement in general. The witnesses for the defence, who spoke to the existence of real grievances of the Flemish rank and file under the prevailing linguistic *régime* in the Belgian army, did not make the inevitability of a movement of discontent quite so clear as did these eminent officers by simply appearing and showing themselves with all their ignorance and prejudices. Several witnesses for the defence declared that, far from having incited to desertion, De Beuckelaere, the Flemish intellectual, often supplied that encouragement and moral support which the majority of the Belgian officers, by reason of their contempt for the language of the Flemings, were debarred from giving them.

The upshot of it all was not only an apotheosis of Dr. De Beuckelaere as an innocent sufferer for the Flemish cause, his nine months in prison, the handcuffs in which he was daily brought to court, all being turned into claims on the gratitude of the Flemish people, but also a resounding defeat for the Brussels chauvinists, for "Le Soir" and the other French-written papers, who were only awaiting the success of their attack on De Beuckelaere to go for others. It has been clear for a long time that the object of the anti-Flamingant campaign was to exclude one Flemish leader after the other from public life. Each time a more moderate man was aimed at, and the next would almost certainly have been M. Van Cauwelaert, the Burgomaster of Antwerp, leader of the Catholic Flamingants. All that has now become impossible, and perhaps Belgium will now get a rest from those sensational political trials the only effect of which has been to irritate the Flemish people and to prepare their minds for the acceptance of the more thorough-going political shibboleths.—Yours, &c.,

AN OBSERVER.

Letters to the Editor.

THE RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION OF 1914.

SIR,—In THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM of September 30th, Mr. E. Belfort Bax says that "it has been conclusively proved by the State documents published in Kautsky's 'Wie der Weltkrieg entstand' that the German mobilization preceded the Russian," and that this fact has been "further confirmed by the evidence of Graf Lerchenfeld in the action for defamation before the High Court at Leipzig in May last."

Having collaborated with Professor Schücking in the publication of the documents prepared by Kautsky, and having been a witness and an expert at the defamation trial, I beg you to publish the following statement:—

The Russian mobilization was ordered by the Tsar on Thursday, July 30th, early in the afternoon. The telegraphic order was dispatched to all parts of the huge Tsarist Empire the same day, at 6 p.m. (4 p.m. Greenwich time). These dates are exactly corroborated in the book of General Sergei Dobrovolsky, who, in 1914, was chief of the Mobilization Department of the Russian General Staff. The Russian mobilization became known in Berlin on Friday, July 31st, at 11.40 a.m. [Kautsky, Doc. 473]. Even then, general mobilization was *not* ordered in Germany, but only "the state of threatening danger of war" [Kautsky, Doc. 479], which corresponds, according to Sir J. Corbett's "History of the Great War" (p. 28), to the British "warning tele-

gram" [issued as early as Wednesday, July 29th]. At the same time, the Berlin Government summoned Russia to stop her mobilization. As no reply had been received, the German mobilization was ordered on Saturday, August 1st, at 5 p.m.—4 p.m. Greenwich time [Kautsky, Doc. 554].

Kautsky, of course, in his book, says *nothing contradictory* to the documents collected by himself! The action for defamation which Mr. Bax refers to did not take place at Leipzig, but at Munich, and the facts stated above were universally recognized as being accurate.

Russia, by mobilizing her gigantic army, meant war. General Dobrovolsky says in his book (p. 10):—

"If this moment (of mobilization) is fixed, everything is settled, there is *no way back*. By this step, the beginning of war is automatically settled beforehand."

And having described the dispatching of the mobilization order on July 30th, he writes:—

"No counter-order was possible. The Prologue of the great historic drama had begun."

Thus, the chief of the Mobilization Department of the Russian General Staff in 1914 is exactly of the same opinion as the French negotiator of the Franco-Russian Military Convention, who, on August 10th, 1892, explained to his Russian colleague:—

"To order general mobilization against Austria or Italy solely means to take the rôle of aggressor in Europe";

and who, on August 18th, explained to Tsar Alexander III.:—

"Mobilization is the declaration of war."

France, too, knew very well that general mobilization meant war. The true Russian Yellow Book, just published in Berlin, reveals, among other crushing documents, the following telegram:—

"THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR IN FRANCE TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

"Telegram No. 216. Paris, July 18th/31st, 1914.

"From Military Attaché to War Minister.

"The French Minister of War told me in an emphatic and cordial tone that the Government is *firmly resolved to go to war*, and asked me to confirm the hope of the French General Staff that all our efforts ought to be directed against Germany, and that Austria ought to be treated as *quantité négligeable*."

(sgd.) ISWOLSKY.

Thus, France was resolved to go to war, even *before* the German mobilization was ordered. This telegram 216, in combination with General Dobrovolsky's statements, seems, in my humble opinion, to solve the question whether the *ultimatum* to Serbia or the Russian mobilization is more responsible for the great catastrophe. The *ultimatum* to Serbia, a wicked document, which I, for one, in no way try to excuse, meant war with Serbia, but not inevitably European war. The Russian general mobilization inevitably meant European war. The fresh evidence brought forward by the true Russian Orange Book contains some sixty documents, out of which no less than forty are shown to have been either completely suppressed or considerably altered in the old Orange Book published in 1914, which was a masterpiece of official forgery. No right-minded man fighting for international understanding will henceforward be able to deny the war-guilt of the Russian and French Governments of 1914.—Yours, &c.,

COUNT MAX MONTGELAS.

(Co-editor of the German Documents on the Origin of the War.)

Eicherhof, Bergen, near Traunstein (Bavaria).

THE PERIL OF "THE NEWS."

SIR,—Will you allow me to draw attention to a new danger imposed upon the world by the progress of scientific discovery—in the power given to Governments through their control of the wireless stations to send forth daily, in all directions, their own selections of news? I was travelling to Barbadoes last April, and for more than 3,000 miles (possibly reinforced at some intervening station) there arrived daily, from our Government station at Leafeld in Oxfordshire, three or four sheets of news, carefully selected from a Government point of view, disproportionate prominence being

given, for instance, to an important speech by Mr. Winston Churchill. These dispatches must be the only channel through which news reaches thousands of people who are too indifferent, or too busy, to correct it by studying belated newspapers some weeks later.

Surely this power to influence public opinion is far too great to be entrusted to some anonymous minion of Downing Street. The task of selection would be worthy of the best energy of some of the fairest-minded men who could be found in the country. If the daily messages were signed, like the Treasury Notes, by someone who could be called to account for unfair selection; and if copies of what is sent out were accessible at some public place in London on the day it is sent, a certain safeguard would be provided which does not exist at present.—Yours, &c.,

JOSEPH STURGE.

Birmingham.

THE CHURCHES AND WAR.

SIR,—The recent articles and speeches by distinguished Nonconformist preachers, calling the Churches to a crusade against war, have not only come seven years too late, but they have contained no expression of repentance for the support of past wars, and no condemnation of the reckless and provocative methods of Mr. Lloyd George, which, in the last few weeks, have nearly landed us in another orgy of organized butchery. In the excellent article in your issue of July 29th, on "Fairweather Pacifism," you declared that "in the hour of man's greatest agony the Christian Churches of every land brought no gift of healing, but held the clothes of those who stoned humanity," and you went on to ask whether "these Bishops and Free Church Ministers hold that the war they blessed has been justified by the peace it won, and that their incitements to young men to kill their brothers have borne sound spiritual fruit?"

Your readers may like to know that the truth has been spoken in one Church of England pulpit. Last Sunday night Dr. Stuart Holden, preaching at St. Paul's Church, Portman Square, denounced war as a ghastly blunder, as well as a moral offence, and said that the Christian Church must recognize the implications of the things it stood for and lead the world out of its maze—or *itself* perish. He declared that Dr. Jowett's recent manifesto was inadequate, because it failed to envisage the situation as it actually existed. "The nation and the world at large," said Dr. Holden, "are not going to give much heed to an unrepentant Church, and before demonstrations and conferences can have any impressive value they must be preceded by united and solemn repentance. The world knows only too well the Church's record in respect of the war—its enthusiastic support of purely national outlook, its message which differed hardly at all from that of the Yellow Press and the music-hall, its share in the propaganda of hate which, in every country, fed the furnace, and its virtual abandonment of moral idealism under stress of military necessity. It knows only too well the Church's record in respect of the so-called Peace—its silence in regard to the vindictive treaty which cynically ignored the very terms on which an Armistice had been sued for and granted; its silence in respect of the necessary reconciliation of the defeated, and its silence about the League of Nations, both as to its constitution and its essential place in the reconstruction of the world's life. And, knowing all this, the proposed Peace demonstrations and conference are in danger of being regarded merely as a 'stunt,' an attempt on the Church's part to secure its own rehabilitation. *The Church must confess before God and man that she lost her head, and almost her soul, under sudden stress of war passion. She must re-enthroned Christ's law above all State necessities.*"—Yours, &c.,

F. A. A.

THE DESTRUCTION OF WHITGIFT HOSPITAL.

SIR,—As a private resident for the past eighteen years in the Borough of Croydon, I read with great relief your comments upon the proposed destruction of Whitgift Hospital. To those who have grown to love what is left of the

original Surrey market-town, and whose children are born and educated in Croydon, the suggestion is outrageous, and leaves the municipality in shame before the world.

Croydon, as a civic centre, appears to have a genius for missing its opportunities. It was possessed of three ancient monuments—a fine Perpendicular church, carelessly allowed to catch fire in 1867; the Whitgift Hospital, a gem of simple Elizabethan architecture; and the old Palace of the Archbishops. It allowed the Palace, surrounded by a quiet garden, to become debased into a tan-yard and a wash-house. It would have been an ideal centre for a civic museum, in which to house the many things of archaeological importance that have been, and are being, found in the town and neighborhood. If that had been done it would have surpassed in interest the well-housed museums of Rochester and Maidstone, and as an aid to education might have equalled the invaluable museum of Haslemere in the same county as Croydon.

The Palace is safe, for, by great good fortune, it has been preserved and cared for by the Sisters of the Church, to whom Croydon owes a great debt. The Whitgift Hospital has been marked for destruction for a long time, and with great ingenuity they have tried to "pinch" it out. The town authority have planned their former street-widenings so that it projects, waiting for the day, which they thought had arrived, when they could clamor for its removal with some hope of success. I can only hope that the satire of your contributor will awaken the civic conscience, will lead to a more careful election of its representatives, and make it impossible for this dastardly proposal to appear again.—Yours, &c.,

PRESCOTT ROW.

The Old House, Waddon, Croydon.

SIR,—Your contributor who tells Croydon where it will be in the minds of decent people if it destroys the Hospital of the Holy Trinity, founded by Archbishop Whitgift, ought to have pointed out that the suggestion that the Elizabethan structure should be run over by tanks came from a Labor Councillor. Has Labor in Croydon never heard of Ruskin, Morris, Anatole France, and the other great humanists who have given knowledge, wisdom, and good taste to its cause? Labor's Parliamentary candidate for Croydon, Mr. Muggidge, voted for the destruction of the historic building.—Yours, &c.,

CROWN HILL.

Poetry.

THE GOLDEN BIRD.

If Joy, the Golden Bird, would fly,
Do not close a hand upon her;
She belongeth to the sky,
With all the winds of heaven on her:
Only when her wings are free
Bird of Lovely Life is she.

He who Joy of Life would store
Heart of his be widely open;
Throw the key out with the door,
Throw the hope out with the hopen;
Give her, as she finds in sky,
Place to dip and soar and fly.

She will come again, I wist;
She of thee shall not be frightened;
She shall sing upon thy fist;
By her shall thy dark be lighted;
By her freedom thou art given
Right and room in joyous heaven.

JAMES STEPHENS.

The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

THURSDAY.

THE week has brought relief in the shape of the dispersal of war clouds in the Near East, which once again last week appeared to be gathering, and this relief has been reflected in the Stock Markets, where a firmer tone has developed, and business is on the increase. Continued ease in Lombard Street helped this development. The immediate cause of this monetary ease is made obvious by the latest statement of national revenue and expenditure. In the week ended October 7th the Treasury had to pay out £40½ millions in respect of National War Bonds maturing on October 2nd, and nearly £27 millions in interest on war debt. As a result the floating debt increased by over £51 millions, of which £30 millions were borrowed from Public Departments and £15½ millions from the Bank of England, while Treasury Bills outstanding were increased by £5½ millions. The feature of Lombard Street in these days is that whenever the Government is in debt to the Bank, monetary ease obtains; but when the position is reversed market stringency threatens.

If the League of Nations' achievement in carrying through the credit plan for Austria has not caused any great improvement in the exchange value of the Austrian krone, it has, at least, checked the headlong depreciation. On the other hand, the German mark has provided the week with its most unpleasant sensation, the quotation having crashed down again to levels of unprecedented depreciation. On Tuesday transactions took place at 13,500 marks to the pound sterling. The grave significance of this new crash lies in the fact that it occurs so soon after the agreement which has given a few months' breathing-space in the Reparations negotiations. If no sane economic solution of this problem is reached in the next month or two it is unpleasant to contemplate the possibilities of what will occur next January, when, failing fresh agreements, Germany will have to resume payments and also to meet the service of the Treasury Bills recently issued. The fear, lurking so long in the minds of many, is now becoming general that German currency will follow the Austrian into chaos. If this occurs, social and political upheavals in Germany become an imminent danger, and Allied politicians must surely be at last realizing the possibility that when, finally, they come to real grips with the problem, it will be too late. Certainly the sands are running out, and running fast. As regards the correlated matter of inter-Allied debts, the City was momentarily excited over rumors that America was prepared to force a solution of the problem in conference with her European debtors; but this proved to be a mere *canard*. The only debt settlement America is prepared to discuss is with Britain, her only solvent debtor, but the domestic political crisis makes it doubtful whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to leave for Washington next week, as arranged, for the purpose of this discussion.

P. & O. REPORT AND SHIPPING PROSPECTS.

The P. & O. Report, which appears a little earlier than usual this year, shows a slight increase in net profits so far as one can judge, for net profits are shown after allowing for depreciation (amount not stated). These are given as £696,660 as compared with £623,531. Supposing the depreciation allowance in the two years to have been similar, the comparison is more favorable to the recent year than a first glance suggests, for an extra charge has been the expenses and discount of the recent 5½ per cent. debenture issue (which amount to over £91,000), while £60,000 is placed to debenture sinking fund. The deferred dividend is, as last year, 12 per cent., free of tax. I am glad to see that the balance sheet has been made more informative, the assets now being divided into four items, instead of being lumped into one. Other shipping companies should note this and follow suit. The shareholders are to be asked to sanction the supplementary charter under which £3½ millions of debentures were recently issued and £3½ millions more may be issued in future. When they will be issued apparently depends on when the directors consider it to be the right time to order new tonnage. It will be interesting to see whether Lord Inchcape, at the annual meeting on the 18th, will venture on any estimate of shipping prospects. From

many quarters the demand for mercantile tonnage has recently shown a quite decided improvement, some of which is seasonal, and some, apparently, due to real betterment in certain lines of world commerce. These signs of improvement should not be overlooked, although, of course, all the obstacles which stand in the way of real recovery in world trade stand, at the same time, in the way of shipping prosperity.

The shipbuilding figures for the September quarter, issued yesterday by "Lloyd's Register," are decidedly poor. At the end of last month the mercantile tonnage under construction in British yards was 1,617,045 tons, or 302,000 tons less than at the close of the June quarter. The latest total does not look so bad when we remember that the average tonnage under construction in the last pre-war year was 1,890,000 tons. But, unfortunately, the decrease from the pre-war average is greater than it seems, for the September figure includes 419,000 tons on which work has, for some long time, been completely discontinued. For those interested in the shipbuilding industry and its finances "Lloyd's Register's" latest returns have two straws of encouragement. In the first place, the figures of actual launchings and also of new keels laid down were better than in the preceding quarter; and secondly, the figures of tonnage under construction abroad suggest that British yards are holding on to their pre-war world-position of supremacy. Many of the foreign yards which sprang up during the boom have had to go out of business.

COMPANY NOTES.

Harrison & Crosfield, Ltd., who suffered a severe loss in the death of Mr. George Croll, have just issued a report which discloses results far better than could have been expected from a firm deeply wrapped up in rubber interests. For the year ended June 30th last the net profits were £149,138, as compared with £164,466 for the previous year. The directors say: "Further considerable sums have had to be provided for depreciation, and the stocks stand in the balance sheet at replacement value or cost, whichever is the lower." There certainly seems to be much justification for the following sentence in the report: "Having regard to all the adverse factors they have had to contend with, the directors consider the result of the year's trading not unsatisfactory." This week raw rubber has climbed up to 9d. per lb. and rubber shares will be further encouraged by the supplementary report of the Stevenson Committee.

Another interesting report of the week is that of the Frederick Hotels Ltd., who for the year ended June 30th last show net profits of £89,781, as compared with £79,681 a year ago. The ordinary shares receive a dividend of 6d. per share as last year, and £16,000 is added to the reserve fund. The accounts include a receipt of £16,335 for compensation for military occupation of the Hotel Great Central. This report supports recent evidence that hotels are keeping their ends up, in spite of the trade depression, and will encourage the recent public support of hotel shares. It appears that the invasion of overseas visitors has come up to expectations—an important point for hotels.

RUSSO-ASIATIC AND THE SOVIET.

Russo-Asiatic Consolidated shares recently rose three or four shillings on the announcement of the agreement between Mr. Urquhart and Krassin of an extensive and highly important nature. This has now been vetoed by Lenin, not, apparently, because he dislikes it, but because he dislikes the British Government. Speculation in these shares was always tempered by nervousness as regards ratification. Mr. Urquhart regards Lenin's act as a "hitch" rather than a "breakdown." Possibly, when, under the spur of the need for foreign capital, the Soviet's new policy of allowing private enterprise has progressed nearer to the point where it will coincide with Western ideas of the rights of capital, this agreement, and many others with other financial groups, will go through. If so, the Russo-Asiatic shareholders will reap compensation for their present disappointment in the fact that their rights are more likely to be safeguarded when the Soviet has to pay regard, not to one only, but to a number of concessionaires.

L. J. R.



THE ATHENÆUM



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The World of Books.

"AUTHORS," writes Mr. Lewis Hind in "More Authors and I" (Lane), "may be divided into four classes: those who are eternally successful; those who are very successful for a time; those who have a spasmodic spurt of success, and those who never have any success at all." If Mr. Hind's books were flatly and objectively entitled "More Authors," a different classification might suggest itself. Authors may be divided into four classes: those who have something to say and know how to say it; those who have something to say and don't know how to say it; those who have nothing to say and know how to say it, and those who have nothing to say and know nothing about saying it. But we are forgetting the Personal Pronoun, a letter which, like the amoeba, has the capacity of engulfing larger bodies than itself. In this case, it has a prodigious appetite, since it engulfs all the other letters of Mr. Hind's title and, quite unconsciously, we suspect, leads this Author to make his own special classification about other Authors.

For those Authors who never have any success at all are not likely to meet Mr. Hind, and if they do not meet Mr. Hind, they are still more unlikely to achieve the publicity of his views about them, and if they do not achieve that publicity, well (here we describe the full critical circle) they do not count at all. They are a waste land fringing the cultivated garden of Mr. Hind's regard and acquaintance. We do not, of course, mean that Mr. Hind only plucks Authors for the vases of his reception room because they are successful growths, but that Success, Publicity, and Mr. Hind are a kind of triumvirate, and the Author who addresses Mr. Hind may be considered to be speaking sooner or later to the world. His words will not be wasted; they will go into cold storage. One might guess that some of them are aware of it. When Mr. Hind was asking Mr. William Archer a lengthy question about one of his books, "he looked as if he agreed with me, but he made no answer," and when Mr. Archer does reply it looks as though "this tall, sturdy, book-and-lamp Viking" weighed his words:—"I'm not a Scandinavian. I'm pure Scotch, born at Perth. I have lots of relations by marriage in Norway, and I know the country, but I am not a Scandinavian. My father was of Queensland, Australia." Sometimes, however, Mr. Hind's impressions of literature are able to dispense with words, and the most salient one of his chapter on W. H. Hudson is of watching him walking

round a pond looking for newts. The chapter on Charles Marriott illustrates another method of enticing the blushing Author into the limelight—arm-in-arm with Mr. Hind, whose soothing manner seems to chase away all reluctances and trepidations. It begins with a description of our Author's tour among the islands of the St. Lawrence River. This makes him think of Charles Marriott, because the twain once went a walking tour in Cornwall, and that gave Mr. Hind "a taste for the wild." Now Charles Marriott has written books with a Cornish setting, and the first of them—"The Column"—was a great success. Meanwhile, Mr. Hind had stopped on the St. Lawrence River at a place called—Cornwall. And so Mr. Hind would have something to tell Charles Marriott when he next met him, and "shall I suggest to C. M. . . . he should next write about the St. Lawrence, and raise a literary monument to him who founded Cornwall there?"

* * *

So the chapter on Sir James George Frazer is chiefly concerned with Mr. Hind's presence at a lecture of his on Addison. What he said about Addison is not recorded, but the chapter concludes thus:—

"When the lecture was over I joined the small throng of congratulators. When my turn came I reminded the author of 'The Golden Bough' that we had met at the Anatole France dinner. He had no recollection of the occasion. Then I complimented him on his marked Scottish accent. That seemed to please him: he whispered that he was a Glasgow man. There our conversation ended, and I made way for another disciple."

As Mr. Hind goes meandering on, sparkling in the sun of Success, and leaping into little splashes of enthusiasm, a casual reader might suspect him of occasional malice, of danger hidden beneath the surface of this smooth and ordinary stream. In the chapter on A. H. Bullen, for instance, he quotes in full a grisly, most outrageous poem of his, which belongs properly to limbo and only by accident to this great critical voyager. But the paralyzing thing is that the casual reader would be quite wrong. Mr. Hind is very Affability itself in human form; his genuine kindness of heart, and unwavering, overwhelming suavity are a sea in which the critical judgment helplessly drowns. "I thought you were a grave, mature man with a beard," says George W. Stevens, when he calls upon Mr. Hind, and Mr. Hind now rejoins with "It is his smile I remember, his sunny, interior smile." That is how this Court Circular of Authors makes us think of Mr. Hind—with a smile, arched caressingly, cloudlessly, proprietorially over his little garden of Authors.

* * *

"I CALL Alfred Noyes our Ambassador for Poetry," and Mr. Hind should be called the Ambassador for Authors. Upon the literary monoliths of our age he scratches his name and brings off the double event—making popular shrines and adding by association a cubit or so to his own stature. More, his Authors seem to belong to him: to go about with a little metal disc round their necks inscribed with the talismanic "C. Lewis Hind." It is one way of having the bubble reputation wooed for one by the kind offices of somebody else.

H. J. M.

Reviews.

THE PAST OF SWITZERLAND.

History of Switzerland. By WILHELM OECHSLI. Translated from the German by EDEN and CEDAR PAUL. (Cambridge University Press. 20s.)

WE think of Switzerland as the land first of mountains and secondly of hotels and waiters. The attitude seems rather contemptuous; but it is surely no worse than the ordinary Continental view of England as the country of mists and shopkeepers. Besides, the plain Englishman's picture of Switzerland contains something essential; more, perhaps, than the plain foreigner's picture of England. For, whereas there seems to be no necessary connection between mists and money-making, there is one between mountains and hotels and waiters. Not that it is necessary to have an hotel on a mountain. That necessity, if it exists, is very modern, and springs from romanticism up-to-date. But between mountains, above all between Swiss mountains, and waiters the connection is obvious. People who live in mountains have always descended to the plains for their living. As Peacock's Welshmen sang:—

"The mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meet
To carry off the latter."

So, from the beginning of their history, the Swiss have descended upon the plains of Europe. The mountain pastures, for all their renown, are too few, and the mountain soil is too scanty, to support their children. From the fifteenth century to the end of the eighteenth the Swiss were the soldiers of Europe: during the nineteenth they adjusted themselves to the new conditions and became its waiters. Every hotel in Europe which has a Swiss staff or a Swiss proprietor represents to the eye of historical imagination a company of Swiss Guards or a Swiss mountain-captain, expert, like Fluellen, look you, in the knowledge of "th' auncient wars." Swiss Guards—Swiss waiters! The economic reality is the same—*pas d'argent, point de Suisse*—and doubtless something of the psychological reality also. I talked to a Swiss waiter this summer in the mountains, who said that when he was seventeen he had gone straight to Edinburgh alone, knowing nobody and no word of English. It was as much an act of courage as to have enlisted two hundred years before in one of the Swiss regiments of Louis XIV. But our incurably romantic imaginations are fired by Swiss Guards; Swiss waiters leave them cold. The last defenders of the *ancien régime*, the Prætorians of the Pope, seem almost to be caricatured by the factotum of an Edinburgh chop-house.

It is something of a paradox that the people of a country should be compelled for centuries to seek their livelihood outside it. We expect nature to adjust a population to its resources. Throughout the course of Swiss history we are being equally surprised by the unexpected. Partly influenced by William Tell and his apple, partly by our knowledge of modern Switzerland as a progressive and pacific democracy, we think, naturally, of the nation as a people which has upheld, in its mountain stronghold, the principle of liberty against tremendous odds. In the phrase of the political orator, Switzerland (we imagine) has always been "free and enlightened." Village Hampdens were as common there as villages; and the only reason why Switzerland had produced no commanding genius in the arts and sciences, save Rousseau, was that the national energies had been healthily preoccupied since the Middle Ages with the working of practical democracy. Alas for that rosy picture! The truth is less comfortable. Switzerland was among the most backward nations of Western Europe. True feudal serfdom flourished there until the end of the eighteenth century; in 1782 a girl was tortured and beheaded for witchcraft in Glarus; and, even in 1821, when the revolutionary wave had swept over the country and subsided, someone was put on the rack, for the same offence, fifty-two times. In 1839 the appointment of Strauss (the author of "The Life of Jesus") as Professor of Theology at Zurich was cancelled because of a popular uprising of the ignorant

peasantry; and in 1844 Lucerne actually handed over the complete control of its higher education to the Jesuits.

From the close of the Reformation until 1848 Switzerland was a loosely united bundle of oligarchies. It was a kind of Holy Roman Empire in miniature, with all its slowness, its incompetence, and its ignorance, and nothing of the clouds of glory which the great Empire trailed after it to its grave. Each Canton regarded itself as an independent State, and behaved with the complacency and petty pride of its larger German brethren. The rights of citizenship, which had been virtually common in the fifteenth century, were gradually usurped until they became the peculiar possession of a handful of families; and these families batten themselves, like snug, smug maggots in a big cheese, on the State, to which the European monarchs paid large annual subsidies for the right of recruiting Swiss soldiers in its territories. These annual pensions were simply shared among the ruling families, so that, for instance, in the early eighteenth century, when there were 50,000 Swiss mercenaries serving on both sides in the War of the Spanish Succession, to be betrothed to the daughter of a member of the Council of Berne who had no son to take his place was commonly reckoned as the equivalent of receiving a dowry of 30,000 gulden. The conditions were roughly the same in every Canton, Protestant and Catholic alike. Everywhere there was a close oligarchy, and everywhere this oligarchy waxed fat, like the Landgraves of Hesse, by selling soldiers to Europe.

It is not a period to which the Swiss patriot can look back with any pride; but it is a very long period in Swiss history. During it, Switzerland was rather suffered to exist than itself existed. Louis XIV. thought it too valuable a recruiting ground to be disturbed; the Swiss mountains seemed formidable; and the reputation of the Swiss soldiers was such that it gave the country a military prestige which was wholly imaginary. If it had come to providing a force to defend the country, as, indeed, it did at the beginning of the French revolutionary war, the effort of Switzerland would have been contemptible. To guard their frontiers during the Austrian attack on France the Swiss Cantons managed to put a force of 2,000 men into the field; but they could not keep it there. It was one thing for the Swiss soldier to be brave and disciplined for decent pay; it was quite another to persuade him to be enthusiastic about defending a country which looked upon him as so much merchandise.

Not only military action, but united action of every kind was impossible for the Swiss Cantons. If the Swiss Diet had to decide whether snow falls in winter, said an eighteenth-century wag, it would take a dozen years. The delegates had no powers; they could merely vote according to their instructions, and the vote of the Cantons had to be unanimous before it was binding. No wonder that during two centuries the Diet made scarcely a single decision. When it did, the decision was as often as not evaded. The difficulties of common action were yet further increased by the religious divisions between the Cantons. As early as 1586 the seven Catholic Cantons formed a separate league, allied themselves with Philip II. of Spain, and behaved henceforward as though they were a separate nation. Although, for fear of the result, this Borromean League did not pursue active hostilities against the Protestant Cantons, the deep division lasted into the middle of the nineteenth century. As late as 1845 the seven Catholic Cantons formed themselves into a "Sonderbund" for the purpose of resisting Federal legislation; and, on one of the rare occasions between these dates when a united political decision was taken, in 1661, when the Swiss Diet refused to renew the alliance with France until certain grievances were settled, the French Ambassador had only to spend money freely in order to persuade every single Canton in the Borromean League to disobey the order of the Diet.

Although the late Professor Oechli, a stout Protestant, could not help suggesting that the Catholics were always a little more to blame than the Protestants, the facts he records, at least during the two centuries of Swiss oligarchy, do not indicate that there was a button to choose between the parties. Protestant Berne seems to have been always as retrograde as Catholic Lucerne; and in the years of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the severity of

Borromeo was as nothing compared to the ferocity of Calvin. Even in the early nineteenth century, when it might fairly be said that reaction found its last home in the Catholic Sonderbund, the Protestant aristocrats of Berne were busy showing themselves to be *bourgeois* Bourbons, who had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. One cannot help feeling, therefore, more sympathy than Professor Oechsli did with Napoleon's contemptuous remark, when he was "mediating" the constitution of the Swiss Confederation, that nothing in the place was worth preserving except the constitution of the Grisons, where the decisions of the Grand Council of the Canton had, from ancient times, been subject to ratification or rejection by mass meetings of the separate communes. Nevertheless, Napoleon preserved more than that. His centralized Republic was not excessively centralized, and his practical statesmanship showed at its best in the act which brought the Peace of Amiens to an end. But here, as elsewhere in the Europe which he so violently revived, his ideas were in advance of the capacities of the people for whom he was legislating. The Federal Pact of 1815 was a retrogression all along the line from the Napoleonic reforms. The close oligarchies returned, and with them the disinclination to allow the central Government to be more than a shadow. Not until the July Revolution had given a fresh impetus to the liberal spirit was any real breach made in a preposterous system which had endured, or rather indurated itself, for two centuries and a-half. For twenty years after the Congress of Vienna the Swiss Confederation was a willing instrument of the repressive policy of Vienna: at Metternich's command it introduced an iniquitous "Press and Foreigner Order," whereby the right of asylum was withdrawn from political refugees, and a rigorous censorship imposed on the Press in its treatment of foreign affairs. Readers of "La Chartreuse de Parme" will remember how little difference appeared to Stendhal between the liberty of Switzerland and the freedom of Austrian Italy. In 1848, however, the Liberal Cantons, pressing for a true federation, were able to overcome the armed resistance of the Catholic Sonderbund in an almost bloodless war. By some characteristic diplomacy Palmerston managed to hamper the Austrian plan of intervention until the accomplished fact. Then the 1848 Revolution distracted Metternich's attention. Switzerland was left to put her house in order; and the history of modern, prosperous Switzerland began.

Oechsli's history, though admirably translated, is not particularly enthralling. It is a sound and dull political narrative, in which people who want the facts will find them. Oddly enough, from his long list of Swiss writers, of whom (except Keller) no one has ever heard, Oechsli completely omits Amiel, who is famous throughout the world. Was it because Amiel was *not* a very stout Protestant?

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY.

A SPANISH PAINTER.

Goya as Portrait Painter. By A. DE BERUETE Y MORET. (Constable. 52s. 6d.)

As an editor's note reminds us, Señor Don Aureliano de Bernete y Moret, the distinguished critic and Director of the Prado Museum, died last June. The present volume, translated from the second edition in Spanish by Mr. Selwyn Brinton, is one of three completing Bernete's study of Goya; the other two dealing with Goya as subject-painter and as engraver respectively. Mr. Brinton describes the work as "a careful, complete, and authoritative analysis of the artist," thus preparing the reader for Bernete's distinguishing qualities as a critic of patience and caution. He was, indeed, careful to a fault; and the only defect in what would seem to be a very good translation is that in places one gets the impression that Mr. Brinton has followed the original so closely as to exaggerate the effect of reserve and qualification in turning a sentence from Spanish into English. This, however, is a fault on the right side, the "brilliant synthesis" of Goya having been supplied by other hands. It is remarkable, too, that, in spite of Bernete's caution and reserve—certainly not lessened by the translator—in a work

which is a study of individual pictures rather than of a personality, a very consistent impression of the personality is left in the mind of the reader. The effect, indeed, is not unlike that of Spanish painting; of something not hastily summarized, but made real by attention to values. Comparing the impression with what one has heard about Goya from other sources, one has the effect of probability behind legend. Thus, Bernete dismisses the idea that Goya was a libertine in his youth and a terrible revolutionary in his maturity, but indicates that he was susceptible and that he hated war. He shows—as indeed Goya's letters to Martin Zapater betray—that the artist was quick-tempered, but will have none of the story that when Goya was painting the Duke of Wellington he threatened him with pistols or, as another account says, flung a cast at his head. Finally, while accepting as natural a sympathetic and even affectionate understanding between Goya and the Duchess of Alba, he disposes of the legend about the famous "Maja Desnuda." No reasonable person can doubt the evidence of Goya's grandson, who, in 1868, on the occasion of a lawsuit in connection with the sale of some pictures, "laughed at the idea of this figure having been taken for the Duquesa de Alba," and identified the subject of both "Majas" with a young girl of Madrid whom Goya employed as his model. As Bernete says, this convincing story has already been told—once by the novelist Vicente Blasco Ibañez, who, by the way, afterwards used "La Maja Desnuda" as the title of a novel, translated here as "Woman Triumphant."

Altogether, Goya emerges from these pages as a much more credible person than we have known hitherto. Bernete claims for him two things in particular: that he was essentially a Spanish painter, and that he was the link between older art and what we know as modern painting in general. Monet, Degas, Cézanne, Manet, and Whistler may all be said to derive from him. In so far as they derive from Velazquez, it was Goya who gave them the opportunity by interpreting the style of that master in the spirit of an age nearer to their own. Between Velazquez and Goya something happened to painting, to portraiture in particular, comparable to what happened as between Greek and Gothic sculpture. In the strict sense of the word painting became more spiritual, more expressive of the soul of man in its movements and aspirations. To say that Goya was "perhaps the greatest portraitist who ever lived" is a bold statement, but looking at the fifty beautiful plates in this volume one is inclined to agree with it. The enlarged head of "Condesa de Chinchón," facing page 110, for example, is almost uncanny in its effect of a living woman. Among the portraits in Goya's "grey" manner Bernete would call "Francisco Bayen," Goya's brother-in-law, the masterpiece, though he gives a high place to "Dr. Peral" in our National Gallery. With these excellent photographs for evidence, the comments of so sound a critic as Bernete, a bibliography of writings on Goya, and what seems to be a complete list of his portraits, this is indeed a book to be received with gratitude.

C. M.

"WAHABILAND."

The Heart of Arabia. By H. ST. J. B. PHILBY, C.I.E., I.C.S. Two volumes. (Constable. 63s.)

DURING the war the politics of the desert, which so often hamper the Arabian traveller, were turned to his account. Mr. Philby crossed the peninsula with a safe-conduct from Ibn Saud, which saw him through the heart of Najd to the borders of the Hedjaz. He also carried a writ from the Sherif of Mecca, implicit if not inscribed, sanctioning his passage through the Holy Land to the coast. An enthusiastic traveller would have risked his neck for these privileges before the war. The late Captain W. H. Shakespear, it is true, had travelled widely in the territories of Ibn Saud and crossed Arabia in 1914, before the storm burst, but it was the menace of the storm that gave him his freedom to come and go. Months before August, 1914, Ibn Saud, the Emir of Southern Najd, recognized the necessity of an understanding with the British if he was to save his State from being swallowed up by the Ottoman Empire.

When we took Baghdad in 1917, the entente with Ibn Saoud simplified the military and political situation for us in Central Arabia. Our policy was to support him in playing the same part in the centre, as the Sherif of Mecca in the east, of the peninsula. Circumstance, interest, and tradition marked him as the appointed scourge of our enemies, who were also his own, in Central Arabia. Ibn Rashid, the Emir of Northern Najd, had thrown in his lot with the Turks, and the history of Central Arabia for the last century-and-a-half has been a record of the ups and downs in the implacable struggle between these houses.

Hail and Riyadh, the capitals of the respective Emirs, have always been the goal of European travellers in Arabia, though very few have reached them. Mecca and Medina have been entered more often by European non-Moslems, and until quite recently they were more accessible, for perilous as the pilgrimage is to infidels in disguise like Burton and Wavell, the road is not closed to apostates. Doughty is one of the few Europeans who have visited Hail, Ibn Rashid's stronghold, and his description of the life there and the tragedy of the House fill the most memorable chapters of his second volume. Muhammad Rashid, who entertained him, was the only sovereign of Hail who escaped death by the assassin. Mr. Philby mentions him as one of the greatest men Arabia has ever produced. Indeed, a long reign and a natural death presuppose greatness in an Asiatic sovereign. There have been no long reigns or great rulers at Hail since Doughty left. Probably the most dominating figure in Central Arabia since the passing of the historic Muhammad Ibn Rashid is the Ibn Saoud of to-day, our ally against the Turk and Mr. Philby's host at Riyadh. So far as his book has a hero it is Ibn Saoud. Ibn Saoud needed a biographer, and Wahabism a historian. The political fluctuations, intrigues, and alliances during the war have little permanent interest. But an intelligent and intelligible reading of Wahabism, how it affects the Arab, what it has done and is likely to do for him, and, above all, a picture of Ibn Saoud, the spearhead of the puritanical revivalist movement, in his own home—this is human and historic stuff, and it would be difficult to write a dull book about it. Mr. Philby's two volumes of travel in Southern Najd, or Wahabiland, as he calls it, are likely to be the standard work on the country for a long time to come.

Mr. Philby had the same opportunities in the household of Ibn Saoud as Doughty during his sojourn with Ibn Rashid. His narrative—his instinct in selection, not his style—is sometimes reminiscent of Doughty. He gives his impressions of Bedouin life and thought through tags of conversation and the long-drawn detail of the march. He writes well—better than most explorers—and has a gift of description, though it requires an effort on the reader's part sometimes to picture his company and surroundings. We do not record this in depreciation. "The little more" that quickens the reader's senses, makes him forget that he is not really at home in the outlandish atmosphere of the desert, and lends him, while he reads, a kind of vicarious intuition, is the rare gift of genius. Doughty's Arabia is a world that might have been created by a great artist, like Conrad's seaboard of Costaguana, remote but intensely real. The atmospheric effect is transmitted unconsciously with fidelity and simplicity, a different kind of genius, though similar in its faithfulness in presenting the elements in which reality is inspired by the imaginative creator. Without this subjective coloring the narrative of a journey across Arabia may become as monotonous as the desert itself. Mr. Philby is perhaps too conscientious. He has crowded too much into his volumes. His meticulous records of every slight change in the surface of the desert between camps may be valuable data for the traveller, but they are as flat as the country described to the general reader. Herein lies the technical and scientific value of the book, and it is an implicit compliment to the author if we quarrel with it; our impatience implies that the arid passages stretch like the Arabian *nafud*, or rolling sand belts, between oases.

For the oases we are thankful. When Mr. Philby is talking of Arabs, especially of Ibn Saoud, he holds us as a man who has an intimate story to tell. He is at home with the Bedouin. And this is the first criterion of worth in a book of this kind. The author must be of them, not merely with them. If he betrays a sense of romance and permits us to see that he regards the Arab as a picturesque figure, he will

not tempt us to follow him very far. The arm-chair traveller who reads to get away from chimney-pots and pavements will insist on a guide who has more in common with his caravan than the *zaman* or *kefi*. For the time being, at least, he must be associated with them by ties of domestic understanding. Mr. Philby is equal to the test. In disguise he looks more like an Arab than Faisal Ibn Abdulaziz Ibn Saoud in the frontispiece. And he plays his part on the stage sufficiently well to carry us with him. His relations with all classes are intimate and perceptive, and this means that he has drawn individuals, and not types, a diversity of characters lifelike enough for us to share his sympathies and irritations. We cordially dislike the adhesive Ibrahim, the leader of his caravan, his lewd talk, and disgusting manners at meals. Whenever Mr. Philby retired to his tent to read or write, the anointed raven-black locks of the Arab would appear at the opening. "Drawing together the outer flaps, he would settle down to a secret smoke, haunted ever by the fear of discovery by his fellows, and breathing out the fumes from the depths of his lungs in ostentatious enjoyment, accompanied by spitting."

Smoking, of course, is anathema to the puritanical Wahabi, and Mr. Philby's tent, with its pipes and tobacco boxes, resembled "a den of vice amid the tabernacles of the elect." There are one or two thrills in the book. One is at Dam in Wadi Dawasir, when the party are in peril of their lives. Another, much more dramatic, of the kind that recurs in dreams of carpet-slipped housemasters long after one has left school, is when a messenger at Mr. Philby's tent announces the approach of Ibn Saoud. Ibrahim and Sa'd al Yumaini, ungodly degenerates, had repaired there for a clandestine smoke. They had scarcely time to "stuff their pipes under the bedding, and bundle out of the tent to salute their master, when the latter appeared at the door without ceremony." Happily, Ibn Saoud did not connect the thickness of the atmosphere with the author's companions. Mr. Philby does not hint at the nature of the penalty that was averted; only, one can imagine that the Wahabi has a more drastic way with offenders than the headmaster with his cane. The author had to move circumspectly in Riyadh. Even his aneroid was regarded as an engine of evil. For among the Wahabis it is forbidden to pry into certain secrets—the sex of an unborn child, the hour of one's death, the events of the morrow, the country in which one will die, and the fall of rain. In one direction only indulgence is lax. It is characteristic of the naïve eroticism of the Arab that the tenets of the Wahabi creed, which forbid smoking, sanction polygamy. "Wallah," said Ibn Saoud to the author, "in my lifetime I have married five-and-seventy wives, and, Inshallah, I have not done with wiving yet." Mr. Philby believes that the number is now a hundred. Of these, many were but wives of the hour. When the chieftain is displeased with his choice he has only to repeat the simple word "Talli, Talli, Talli," three times, to be rid of her. Ibn Saoud generally has three wives at a time, one less than the Prophet's allowance of four, to exceed which would be to merit hell fire. Thus there is a vacancy in his harem which may be filled at his pleasure by any girl to whom he may take a fancy on the road. The law is unbroken, and the puritan in the Bedouin does not say a word.

Ibn Saoud is a stern spirit and keeps a rigid account of his actions with God. Judged by the standard of Cromwell or Solomon, he is a great man. In his welding power one is reminded a little of Govind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru. "He found the Badawin homeless, poor, without religion, and cursed with a tribal organization which made united action impossible, and strife inevitable—in the new colonies he has settled them on the land with the fear of God and hope of Paradise in their hearts, substituting the brotherhood of a common faith for that of a common ancestry, and thus uniting in common allegiance to himself as the vicegerent of God elements hitherto incapable of fusion." Mr. Philby writes with conviction, and his summary of the discussions he had with Ibn Saoud on politics and religion bears out his estimate of the man, the single human life in Najd which stands between order and chaos.

We have said nothing of Mr. Philby's explorations, and these, to the scientific mind, provide the most important matter in his book. He was the first European to traverse and map the southern country, the provinces of Aflaj and Wadi Dawasir on the borders of Rub al Khali, or the Empty



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Abode. We may expect another book from Mr. Philby, though he gives no definite promise of one. The present two volumes of nearly 700 closely printed pages do not include the record of his later wanderings, or of the Wahabi campaign against Ibn Rashid in the autumn of 1918.

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IN his recollections Mr. Arthur Machen tells us how, when he first came to London, he was a real lover of the theatre. This did not mean any particular knowledge of, or interest in, great drama, or any especial affection for acting; that love of the theatre was but one aspect of the collector's instinct which is alive in most children, and sends some to books, others to coins, others to playbills, and others to that strange sport philately. It will be remembered, too, that the youthful narrator in M. Proust's long novel had this same appetite. He, being a Parisian, had an advantage denied to the Londoner—for he went and read the posters on the kiosks, admiring the colors, and choosing his favorite play very much by the sound of its title and the hue of its bill. Mr. Machen had to pursue his studies in the papers, when he still lived in Gwent, as he says:—

"I was vividly interested in that phrase, 'For cast see under the clock.' . . . The real meaning of the words never occurred to me; I conceived that somewhere, in some dimly-imagined central place of London, there was a great clock on a high square tower, and that this tower was so prominent an architectural feature as to be known all over London as 'the clock.' And at the base of this tower, so I proceeded in my fancy, there were displayed bills or posters, containing the casts of all the plays of all the theatres."

Now this "fondness for the play" bears, as Mr. Machen suggests, "very little relation to any serious interest in the drama as a form of art," and it is an affection from which a very great many people still suffer. Here, indeed, lies the difference between those who denounce our theatre—on the whole—and those who insist that you can find "very good shows in London." There are some very experienced and extremely intelligent critics of the drama who are still, above all things, "fond of the play"—Mr. Walkley, for instance; and this fondness sometimes makes him terribly severe with dramas which, whatever else they do, are not going to render the theatre more enjoyable. The very best plays are certainly those which appeal both to the lovers of art and to those who are fond of the play; but—and here is the mischief of it—the progress of the theatre, and ultimately its existence, depend on the dramatists who do not primarily appeal to those who are "fond of the play"; the good critic, the good theatrical manager, is the man who sees to it that the needs of those who rejoice at the mere sight of the footlights are kept subservient, are, indeed, satisfied only by the way. The drama, in short, which tries to be theatrical is still-born—as most British plays between Sheridan and Robertson were still-born.

What of the dramatist of to-day? Is he trying to keep drama alive, or is he in danger of stooping to please those who cry "Ha-ha!" at the smell of grease-paint and shout for joy at the sight of a hare's foot? Here we have nine volumes, containing some fifteen plays, by dramatists old and new; plays written in all kinds of styles, and from all kinds of platforms, by men of obviously conflicting opinions on life and art—yet they all, we think, are efforts to keep the drama alive, to keep the theatre in touch with life, and to give the audience, not merely an excuse, but a reason, for enjoying itself. They do not all succeed: about Mr. Cecil

Roberts it were kinder to keep silence. His tushery about medieval Genoa betrays no genuine passion, and very little dramatic effect. We did not expect to live to read such verse as—

"This silence frightens me!—is—is this death?
This beauty, these dear hands, this golden head,
Stilled evermore! I had not thought that Death
Could be so beautiful, and silence be
So eloquent."

The echoes of that are a little too evident. Mr. Nichols, however, has written an extremely promising blank-verse play in his "Earl Simon." There are moments when his verse gets rather turgid and rhetorical; but the characterization of Simon de Montfort and his wife, of King Henry and his barons, is admirable—while the brief sketch of that noble soul and brave Englishman Robert Grossteste, Bishop of Lincoln, is a dignified and effective piece of work. George Calderon's Elizabethan *pastische* on Thomas Cromwell need not delay us. It has learning—as we should expect from Calderon—a certain hard, rhetorical style, quick action, and a sense of character; but a play with Cromwell as hero needs more conviction in that crooked person's righteousness than Calderon had. He makes what he can of Cromwell's one likable trait—his loyalty to Wolsey; but Wolsey's opportune death prevented that from being put to a severe test. The rest of our plays—except Calderon's pantomime, which is a poor, "undergraduate" piece, a parody on Ibsen—are modern and realistic; what have they to say to the man fond of the theatre?

The most noticeable thing, to our mind, about Sir Arthur Pinero, Mr. Maugham, Mr. Gilbert, and George Calderon, is the extremely prosaic character of their plays. It used to be complained that Ibsen was drab, prosy, provincial—devoid, presumably, of the lambent lyric-light which danced over "Our Boys" and "The Colleen Bawn." The complaint was, of course, nonsense. Even "Hedda Gabler"—the most depressing of the great plays—is full of suppressed poetry: what it lacks, what much of Ibsen lacks, is the high language of poetry. Ibsen's plays, that is, are strictly realistic in the main—but their very considerable diversion into symbolism and mysticism must not be forgotten. Now, our modern dramatists, successful or unsuccessful, are—with the exceptions of Bernard Shaw and Barrie—nearly all prosy in mind and prosy in method; never so prosy, as, alas! "The Enchanted Cottage" shows, as when they make desperate efforts to be fantastic. "If you want to catch the lark, go out and put salt on its tail, salt on the tail of fancy: that's how Barrie does it." So someone must have told Sir Arthur Pinero. And with infinite patience he went and sat in the garden, and watched and watched, and waited and waited, and one day a lark came near enough, and he got the salt on, fell on the bird—and brings it in as dead as dead, without a twitter to it. "The Freaks," odd as it is, is better. It is fantastic—rather ugly and with a sort of converted cruelty about it; but it has an odd fascination—only how one sighs for some spark of imagination in the dialogue, some gleam of fancy, something not neat, or arranged, or competent in the play's development!

Where Sir Arthur Pinero deals in situations and "characters" in the Dickensian sense, Mr. Maugham deals in ideas and character. "The Land of Promise" is a bad play. It suffers enormously from Mr. Maugham's genuine contempt for women—an emotion to which he has a right, but which certainly hampers him both as a novelist and a dramatist. It will be remembered that the heroine of the play, a lady's companion who has been left penniless, joins her brother in Canada, quarrels with her sister-in-law, and marries an acquaintance in a moment of pique. There is good writing and critical observation in the first act, at Tunbridge Wells, but when he gets to Canada Mr. Maugham has about the same views of human nature as Miss Dell. He does not idealize the appearance or manners of his strong, brutal man, it is true; but he has the crudest ideas as to his capacity to manage women. The play is competent and is "full of fat" for the actors—but it is barely tolerable to a real lover of the drama, unless he is also "fond of the play." "Cæsar's Wife," technically a less brilliant piece, has a much better study of character in Sir Arthur Little; but it, too, is weighed down with that extreme degree of prosaic bareness which robs us of the chance to see in the play a vision of something bigger and more tremendous than

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the actual lives of the characters. Just as Sir Arthur Pinero fails to illuminate, and can only decorate, his situations, so Mr. Maugham cannot transfigure, but only dress up, his ideas.

Calderon and Mr. Gilbert both have a vision. Calderon, indeed, is a difficult person for the student of modern drama to place. An obvious debtor to Shaw, with a certain kinship to Harkin, and a curious leaning in thought (not at all represented in his technique) to the Russians, especially Tchekhov, he wrote few plays, none very good ones, and was always apt to spoil his best effort by some exhibition of sheer Tuckishness. Of his two modern plays—"Revolt" and "The Fountain"—the better is "Revolt." It would have been a very strong play indeed, had Calderon had the wit to eliminate the love interest altogether, and given us a play on his very exciting theme—what is the inventor, the originator, the future George Stephenson or Edison, to do between Capital and Labor? Jeff Hodder, the engineer, gets crushed between the two. In the works where, against his better judgment, his great invention is being slowly perfected and tried, a strike occurs. The workmen ask him to strike with them. He has waited for years for the chance to work, and this seems too much to him, and he breaks out:—

"Nothing matters in this world, one would think, but the division of money between the employers and working men. I've got principles at stake too. We claim the right to go on inventing and creating, the right to live without crawling under your table for crumbs. If you won't grant us our right, we'll take it by force."

The play almost ends in catastrophe; but Calderon evades the real problem and the naturally tragic ending by bringing in the love interest. Still, "Revolt" is interesting, and, if unimaginative in itself, is the work of a man with imagination and a sense of the beautiful. Mr. Gilbert continues his study of rural England in "King Lear at Hordle." It is a pity he gave his book so ambitious a title, for he recalls neither Shakespeare nor Turgenev. His plays are plain, straightforward little dramas of village life; his characterization is not at all subtle or distinctive; he deals in types rather than individuals, and his plays should be successful before country audiences. He still looks a little jaundiced as he meditates on the country; but not so jaundiced as in "Old England."

In spite of all its crudity, its violence, its oversimplicity, we are not sure that Mr. Richard Hughes's is not the best of our selection. It is written in prose, but a strong poetic prose; and it has the imaginative passion of a poet behind it. Whether it is legitimate to make a play out of a blind deaf-mute and his murder by a child-sister some may doubt; but Mr. Hughes does invest his terrible theme with beauty and pity. Lowrie's piteous, agonizing efforts to think, to cope with the high mystery of the world, to decide why her sisters' lives, and her own, are to be blighted by the charge of Owen—all these are rendered finely and reticently. It is with real art that Mr. Hughes shows how the conventional resentment of John, Charlotte's fiancé, the use of pious expressions as to "God's will," and the frightful illustration of the destiny of the wounded rabbit, with which the play opens, convince Lowrie that her brother would be better dead. The rage of John when Lowrie makes her pitiful, childish confession seems to us unnatural—it is incredible that his reactions would be quite so vulgar and stupid. Still, "The Sisters' Tragedy" is a very remarkable play for a young author; and it has that suffused beauty which is the only preservative of literature.

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SOME day there will arise a literary historian whose path will lie neither among the Elizabethans nor the Augustans, but among a series of writers none of whom, perhaps, is of the highest order, but all of whom compose a "school" or lineage as veritably English as Lamb. He will, we suppose, consider Gilbert White as the foremost figure of his survey, but he will have a cloud of witnesses compassing the Selborne parson about; indeed, he will be kept busy for a number

of years, and he will never know when he has finished his work, which has so far been attempted only in the slightest way. This historian, good luck to him! will record the origins, rise, and progress of English writers upon rural life, with especial accuracy towards nature's considerable share in it.

The poetry of Wordsworth and of Shelley must have exercised a magnificent influence over the spirits and the labors of the English people in their last hundred years; Carlyle's earthquakes, with reverberations still rumbling, have shaken us into something like a sense of our duties to humanity; Dickens has trained the interest of the million in humanity's better imperfections. These were great writers. A development not less extensive, not less beneficial, has been brought about in almost the same period by a host of writers with scarcely a great name among them, and the majority of them unknown to the usual literary history. They have built up a tradition of humanity's regard for nature of which few can be entirely unaware; they asserted in their quiet prose the just enjoyment of the drama in which man plays his part, and combated ignorance and its works with that admirable weapon, the truth.

White, no doubt, began this particular tradition, and the singular, sweet ease of his manner, and complete freedom from anything like preaching, have made his work an evergreen. "It is the hardest thing in the world," his twenty-eighth letter began, "to shake off superstitious prejudices"; but with his earnest followers he appears to have been tolerably successful in shaking them off. The generations that grew up with his sort of pabulum could scarcely acquire them; the old school of rooted misconceptions died hard, but is now almost gone. After White (we speak from our own shelves, and not as the laborious historian whom we have foreshadowed) the humanitarian process never stopped. It took various forms, but there was in them all one and the same benevolence. The most immediate means of furthering love of nature was the natural-history article, which with its cuts (not always the strict image of the animal concerned) sprang up in almost every popular and juvenile periodical. Then there were series of books which had almost as assured and as readily consuming a public; such as the Library of Entertaining Information, with its three volumes upon Insects. These publications went far: nor did books of more stylistic merit lack a welcome. Edward Jesse, who must have been the best master dog ever had, wrote much and well, and the public supported him; his "Gleanings in Natural History," after several issues, was adapted as a school-book. Knapp, directly inspired by White's "Selborne," published his "Journal of a Naturalist"—"a traveller through the inexhaustible regions of nature"—in 1829, and had the reward of three editions in his lifetime. Like many another of his fraternity, he remained anonymous. Then the hero of Walton Hall, where the most villainous bird might find a welcome, the inimitable Charles Waterton, sent forth his lively essays; there was a touch of the detonator about Waterton. A number of literary lovers of nature flourished: the Aikins, Howitts, Willmott, for example, and even Leigh Hunt with his certainly beautiful little work "The Months." Other authors of mark followed in the wake of White—Thomas Miller ("the basket-maker"), Anne Pratt, Canon Atkinson; nor need we remind the reader that Buckland and Wood were popular. It was a movement as eager and strong as any of the Victorian movements; and there is no knowing what good, honest reading may be picked up at any bookstall under the guise of "Notes of a Fen Parson," or some such title, the least regarded of the contributions to the kindly theme. What a delight was then taken in the composition of such books on nature! The compiler of the "Naturalist's Poetical Companion," 1833, scoured the obscurest periodicals for his materials. The author of "A History of British Starfishes," Edward Forbes, illustrated his most learned book himself "with a view to secure correctness," and drew tailpieces of a whimsical fancy in which goblins play on trumpets to starfishes dancing "that never were on land or sea," and sea-urchins (both Echinidae and Pueri) are delineated with gusto.

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ambitious to show his powers as a writer, or considered himself "scientific." Like the Suffolk squires and Oxfordshire rectors of the early Victorian years who wrote because they had something to tell, which had seemed to them well worth notice, "A Woodman" is quite content with a natural utterance. If the cat sneaks round the haystack with a young rat in her jaws, and you have no objection, he will say so; and he does not ask whether he is surprising the public with his style or his discoveries—he is drawing the picture that his life has made for him. And like those older rural scribes, he is apt by accident as it were to write a fine and nervous passage. "A Woodman" is sometimes naive: "As we saunter through the Firs, inhaling their health-giving aromatic odors at every step, the sun lights up the tree trunks, giving them quite a metallic hue." Now no trained writer would have left that sentence in his book as it stands. But the trained writer would have been lucky if he had hit upon these words: "The wind comes with a 'sish' through the bents, and nearly shakes off several ants that are climbing up them. On the rails round a pond in which a herd of cattle are standing knee-deep in the cool water and flicking the flies off with their long tails, two swallows are sitting. How softly and sweetly they chatter their little melody and take but little heed of the cattle on the pond edge, but seem, like myself, in meditative mood."

That gentle contented mood, so hit to a hair in the simple paragraph, is fruitful in "A Woodman's" little book. Its presence, his good fortune, has enabled him to see the country clearer than most countrymen. Many know the details as well as he; few can be so conscious of the inter-relationships of them all, or contemplate them as part of their lives. But "A Woodman" proclaims that balance of life to discern which is the beginning of wisdom.

ALBERT BALLIN.

Albert Ballin. By BERNHARD HULDERMANN. (Cassell. 12s.)

HERR HULDERMANN'S book was published last year in Germany, and received a good deal of notice, principally owing to the "revelations" which it contained with regard to the official and semi-official negotiations conducted between Ballin and Sir Ernest Cassel on behalf of the German and British Governments. If Ballin had been an Englishman, he would have been called a pro-German; being a German, he was called in Germany pro-English. He was also a *persona grata* with the Kaiser, and had, by his own energy and business abilities, built up the most successful of the great German shipping companies, the Hamburg-Amerika. His character, as this book and the photograph at the beginning of it show, was a curious one. On the surface a colorless and drab man; a dull and rather dreary financial gentleman who had convinced himself that what made the wheels of business, and therefore of the world, go round was compromise. Superficially this passion for compromise might, at any rate in his biography, give him the appearance of a weak man; it was in reality his strength and the foundation of his success. The first part of Herr Huldermann's book is concerned with Ballin's business career, and though the story, as told, owes little or nothing to the skill of the biographer, it has at least as much interest as the chapters which deal with high politics. In business, Ballin never believed in fighting a competitor when you could get him into an agreement, a trust, or a pool. He was one of the first of the great capitalists to see that it is not in the interests of great capitalists to cut one another's throats, but better to come to some reasonable compromise as to the division of the spoils. It is customary to say of all the great "captains of industry" that they had a hand of iron under their velvet glove, and Ballin sometimes used his, but it was almost always not to crush a rival, but to force him to come in and share the profits.

When the Great War came and destroyed, among other things, the Hamburg-Amerika, Ballin thought and said that it was a "stupid war." Most people are now beginning to agree with him; but long before the war came, Ballin thought and said that it would be

stupid for Germany and Britain to fight each other. He thought of politics in terms of his business experience, and he would have liked to form an international pool for States just as he had done for shipping. He began his career as a semi-official emissary of the German Government at a meeting with Sir Ernest Cassel in the summer of 1908. For four years he and Sir Ernest continued their negotiations, which were mainly concerned with the possibility of an agreement which might end the naval competition between Germany and Britain. The text of Ballin's official reports of his interviews with the British emissary and other documents relating to the negotiations are given in this book. They are interesting side-lights on the important events of those years, but they do not add very greatly to our knowledge of the facts. Ballin himself and other people in Germany believed that the negotiations, which had begun promisingly, were wrecked by their being taken out of the hands of the unofficial negotiators and entrusted to official circles. The impression which this book and its documents leave upon one is that, in Ballin's opinion, the final failure of the negotiations after Lord Haldane's visit in 1912 was due mainly to the German officials who decided that the Navy Bill must go before the Reichstag in its original form, although in the negotiations the German Government had been willing to give assurances that the provisions of the Bill would not be carried out.

From the Publishers' Table.

IN succession to Professor Gordon, who has taken up the Merton Professorship of English Literature at Oxford, Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie has been appointed Professor of English Language and Literature at Leeds. This choice will, we imagine, satisfy critical opinion.

A MEMORIAL to Sir Walter Raleigh, whose work passes to Professor Gordon, is to be found in Mr. Milford's "Periodical" for September, which gives one of the latest portraits of Raleigh, a short memoir, notices of his history of "The War in the Air," and a bibliography of his writings in the journals and separate publications. The last is a most skilful guide to a picturesque miscellany of literary work.

DR. GREVILLE MACDONALD, whose address is Wildwood, Haslemere, Surrey, sends us the following interesting letter:—

"I am now at work upon a Biography of my father, the late George MacDonald, the Scottish poet and novelist.

"I shall be greatly indebted if you will, through this communication, advise your readers of the fact, and that I should be grateful if they would let me have any letters of my father, or anything that might be useful to me."

IN November there will appear, from Mr. John Murray, "Letters and Papers of John Addington Symonds." Their period is that from 1865 to 1893, when Symonds died: and they were chiefly addressed to Henry Sidgwick and Horatio F. Brown. Mr. Brown is the editor.

"THE Beacon" is transferred from Mr. Blackwell to Messrs. Allen & Unwin, and its price is reduced to 1s. 6d. a number. Its development, at the same time, is proceeding.

OUR own best recollection of the 47th (London) Division applies to the concert party at Halifax, near Vlamertinghe, in early 1917, when the revue "Hullo, Halifax!" created a sensation through the Salient. We hope the troupe is mentioned duly in "The History of the 47th Division," to be published on October 31st. Copies (at 11s. by post) will be supplied by Mr. F. S. Stapleton, Amalgamated Press, Lavington Street, S.E. 1.

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Music.

A COMMONSENSE OPERA.

THAT the "Old Vic." should choose a modern opera by an English composer for the opening night of its autumn season is a remarkable sign of the times. The "Old Vic." is not a theatre that is in a position to try rash experiments. It cannot set itself the task of producing a certain number of new works every year, as a Continental opera-house may do and as some are obliged to do. But it was a courageous act on the part of the management to take up "The Boatswain's Mate" last April, and the crowded and enthusiastic audience that came to hear it last week justified that courage. Other operatic enterprises have produced new English works every now and then, from one motive or another, but not one of them has attained a secure place in the operatic repertory since the days of "Maritana" and "The Bohemian Girl." Sir Thomas Beecham gave an excellent first performance of Dame Ethel Smyth's opera, but it did not seem to hold the stage. The "Old Vic." has shown that it can fill a house just as well as "Madame Butterfly." Whether other companies could make such a success of it may be doubted. It makes no extraordinary demands on singers or orchestra, but it demands intelligence. Its production is not a mere matter of routine. The "Old Vic." has an exceptional advantage over most opera-houses: it can count upon a singularly intelligent audience. In no other theatre have I seen an audience so alert and so quick to respond to wit and humor in an opera. Such an audience is naturally a wonderful support to those on the stage. It is never necessary to exaggerate; every little point "gets across" at once. The cast at the "Old Vic." could not have been bettered. Miss Muriel Gough was exactly the right interpreter of Mrs. Waters, for she has made the part of Susanna in "Figaro" peculiarly her own, and Mrs. Waters, with her peculiar blend of attractiveness and practical common sense, is much the same sort of person as Susanna. She is a real individual, not a mere operatic heroine. Mr. Sumner Austin was perhaps a shade too refined for Ned Travers, but his sprightly humor and sympathetic voice completely won the hearts of the audience. In the small parts of Mary Ann and the Policeman, Miss Nono and Mr. Harrison struck just the right balance of grotesque humor and artistic restraint. Mr. Robert Curtis was born to act the Boatswain. Not merely did he look and act the part to the life, but he caught exactly the right style of singing in every phrase. His comedy was never overdone, and in the sentimental parts, where most tenors would have seized the opportunity to show off their voices, he was no less completely the Boatswain than in his spoken dialogue. With the composer conducting, the whole opera went with a splendid animation.

What gives "The Boatswain's Mate" its unique quality is that it is, in Dame Ethel Smyth's own phrase, "a streak of life." Its characters are real people all the way through. Here, again, one is reminded of "Figaro." The libretto, which is the composer's own work, breathes the spirit of Da Ponte. Her personages express themselves in the plainest of plain English, and she sets her words to music so that they always come out as uncompromising common sense. The phrase "a comic-opera situation" has passed into a stock phrase of journalism. "The Boatswain's Mate" is a comic opera, but it has no "comic-opera situation." And what is more important, it does not belong to that class of comic operas the intention of which is to make all opera ridiculous. Grand opera has been made the

subject of operatic caricature almost from the earliest beginnings of grand opera. But there is a difference between satirizing the absurdities of certain "grand operas" and deriding the whole idea of expressing drama in terms of music. Dame Ethel Smyth mocks at the weaknesses of human nature, but she respects her own art. She shows us that the most commonplace people have feelings, both laughable and serious, for which music is the natural expression. The Boatswain becomes "operatic" now and then, because his emotions are insincere; that is part of his character, as Mr. Curtis so cleverly realized. The Policeman expresses himself in conventional phrases, because convention is what a policeman stands for.

To have carried out this commonsense attitude to opera so logically and naturally is a very remarkable accomplishment. It demands a high standard of technical skill, both in letters and in music. Everybody has heard opera in which some commonplace sentence suddenly strikes the ear and dissolves the house into laughter, to the utter ruin of the dramatic situation. In this opera people are uttering commonplace phraseology almost the whole time, but it never sounds ridiculous. The usual attitude, both of performers and listeners, towards opera is either that opera is absurd and therefore a subject for laughter, or that it is absurd by its very nature and must be accepted as absurd. *Credo quia absurdum*—and so, if it wasn't absurd, it wouldn't be a proper opera. The result is that most opera-singers have grown up in a convention of operatic absurdity, and are quite frightened and disconcerted when they have to sing plain English as plain English. For, although plain English sounds natural and delightful as Dame Ethel Smyth writes it and sets it, so long as it is sung in the way that she requires, plain English sounds indeed ridiculous when it is mouthed in the manner of Victorian oratorio. It was brought home to me very forcibly once at an English performance of "Carmen," in which Carmen sang in the conventional operatic manner, while Don José, being a person of less ample physical endowments, sang his share of the recitatives at a natural speaking tempo. The old-established English translation of "Carmen" has often been criticized, but Don José made it sound reasonably sensible, whereas Carmen made it the reverse. To the lady in question Carmen was a star part; no doubt her teachers had told her that that was the way Calvé always did it, and, of course, that was the only way in which it could be done, whether in French or in English. To imagine what sort of a person Carmen was as a human being she probably did not consider her business; her business was to sing the opera. And very probably if an English singer did try seriously to work out the real character of Carmen she would make an even worse hash of the part. Mrs. Waters is a very different sort of lady; there is no doubt about her nationality. None the less, Mrs. Waters requires thinking out; and the singer who refuses to think parts out and sticks to the safer and easier method of accepting operatic absurdity as a dogma will never be able to make anything of Mrs. Waters.

There is another reason why "The Boatswain's Mate" finds a natural home at the "Old Vic." It is an opera which depends—as "Figaro" does—on ensemble. Not merely on the accurate singing of the trios and quartets, but on a sense of ensemble in acting as well as singing that must pervade the whole work. It is an opera in which the singers must always be thinking about the opera as a whole and not about their own individual opportunities. The Boatswain is a conceited man, but if he were acted by the usual type of conceited tenor, the part would stand little chance of realization. At the "Old Vic." there is a standing tradition of ensemble. It is part of the spirit of the house. All those who took part in "The Boatswain's Mate" are regular members of the company; indeed, there is hardly a single opera performed at the "Old Vic." in which Miss Gough, Miss Nono, and Mr. Harrison do not take some part or other. They are all singers to whom ensemble is a first consideration, and their constant example can, to a great extent, influence the style of every new accession to the society. There was another influence too that

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made itself felt in the background throughout "The Boatswain's Mate," the influence of Mr. Robert Atkins, whose chief function is the production of Shakespeare. It is largely owing to his example as a producer of plays, as well as to his occasional help with the operas, that the "Old Vic." has in these last few seasons begun to take a new position in the operatic world. To his courage and intelligence was due the successful production of Mr. Nicholas Gatty's "The Tempest" in April. For the ordinary operatic managers "The Tempest" was hopeless; Mr. Atkins could enter into the poetry of it and set its musical beauty in the right frame. "The Tempest" and "The Boatswain's Mate" have established the "Old Vic." as the true home of English opera.

EDWARD J. DENT.

The Drama.

A HINT TO THE "OLD VIC."

The Old Vic.: Henry IV. Part I.

THE other night I was handsomely invited to the "Old Vic.," a place that I love, and I will now play the ungentlemanly trick of quarrelling with the entertainment. Let me hasten to add that if I had heard the play ("The First Part of Henry IV.") anywhere than at the "Old Vic." I should have been fairly content. But the house in the Waterloo Road is rather sacred soil. It is much more a "home" of the drama than a "house" of entertainment. Something serious in its intellectual effort, and peculiarly cordial and domestic in the audience's response, gives it a character such as belongs to the Church. It is, in a word, a place of good intent, of an uncommercial, a religious atmosphere. And when one thinks of a church, of such a church as I have in mind, one thinks also of the use of noble, historic words, such (to take one example out of hundreds) as the collect which dismisses the evening worshipper with this immortal benediction, addressed equally to his body and his soul:—

"Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Now it happens that just such words as these, written by a man of the same epoch as the authors of the English Liturgy, and almost as familiar as they are, came into the play I heard the other night, in the famous opening speech of the King:—

"Therefore, friends,
As far as to the sepulchre of Christ,
Whose soldier new, under whose blessed cross
We are impressed and engag'd to fight,
Forthwith a power of English shall we levy;
Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' womb
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet,
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nail'd,
For our advantage, on the bitter cross."

These, we know, were the thoughts about religion of a representative Englishman of the Middle Age, of the temper and mind of Henry IV., and when we hear them we expect them, and all that follows, gay or grave, to be spoken as if they belonged to the sacred literature of our people. As it happened, these particular words were not at all badly spoken. But of the play as a whole, I must say that neither its language, nor its meaning, nor its scheme of character, was in consonance with the place which the "Old Vic." holds in our regard. Take the simple test of the delivery of blank verse. I could have easily counted the number of lines in which the proper stresses seemed to me to be observed. They were a scant array compared with those whose quality of thought and beauty of expression were wholly or partly obscured. What is the cause? Why should I, a devout Shakespearean, be impelled, in this Shakespearean theatre, to rush on to

the stage, and say: "No, No! That is all wrong. Speak it like this"? Is it that the modern actor cannot live in the atmosphere of great poetry, or his mind attain to the correct reading of intellectual speech (of which there is a great deal in "Henry IV."), or that his ear is lost to all sense of the Shakespearean cadence? No. Anyone who heard Mr. Moscovitch's Shylock at the "Court" realized at once that this seemingly lost art had been recaptured, and that if our young actors would go to school to this Polish Jew, they would learn how to speak Shakespeare, as well as how to act him. At present most of them set the devout Shakespearean the difficult task of recomposing the plays as he hears them, and, by this effort of the fancy, re-convincing himself that Shakespearean speech is beautiful, and not a tedious rant. Actors, as Johnson said, tend to fall into a "run" of words, without regard to emphasis. And this is just the vice on which our National Theatre should set an unwinking guard.

Another point. What is the conception of "Henry IV."? It is apparent, I suggest, in the author's sudden dip from high life to low life, with the parallel descent from a projected Crusade to a Civil War. The topic of the play is the old one, "Le Roi s'amuse." But a prince about to blossom out into a great king, and taking a preliminary header into the mud, must be well amused; and for Hal in Eastcheap therefore Shakespeare provided the Prince of Entertainers. Falstaff is no more a figure of fun than Henry is a frivolous, or a medieval "nut." He, too, has his game, powerfully and unremittently pursued, of which the Prince, in his turn, is thoroughly conscious. The king of blackguards, quick, subtle, and sly of mind, a philosopher no less than a wit, has his eye on Westminster, not on Eastcheap. In a few months he will be the new king's eye and ear; meanwhile, not a dull hour must this clever boy pass in the great rogue's company. But both the Falstaff and the Prince Henry of the "Old Vic." missed between them the fencing of two acute intellects which appears in the resolve of Falstaff to draw the Prince on, and of the Prince not to be drawn too far. The princely dignity of mind and carriage was lost; the Falstaffian calculation hidden in the merely frolicsome side of the grandest *improvisatore* in all literature. Falstaff, therefore, should be made to look as wicked as he is. He is a great characteristic figure in the play of existence, not a sport for the rough play of the boards. And this was not the Falstaff of the "Old Vic."

These are hints. I hope the management of this fine institution will not take them amiss.

H. W. M.

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